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Lo, and Behold Ye!  
Seumas MacManus

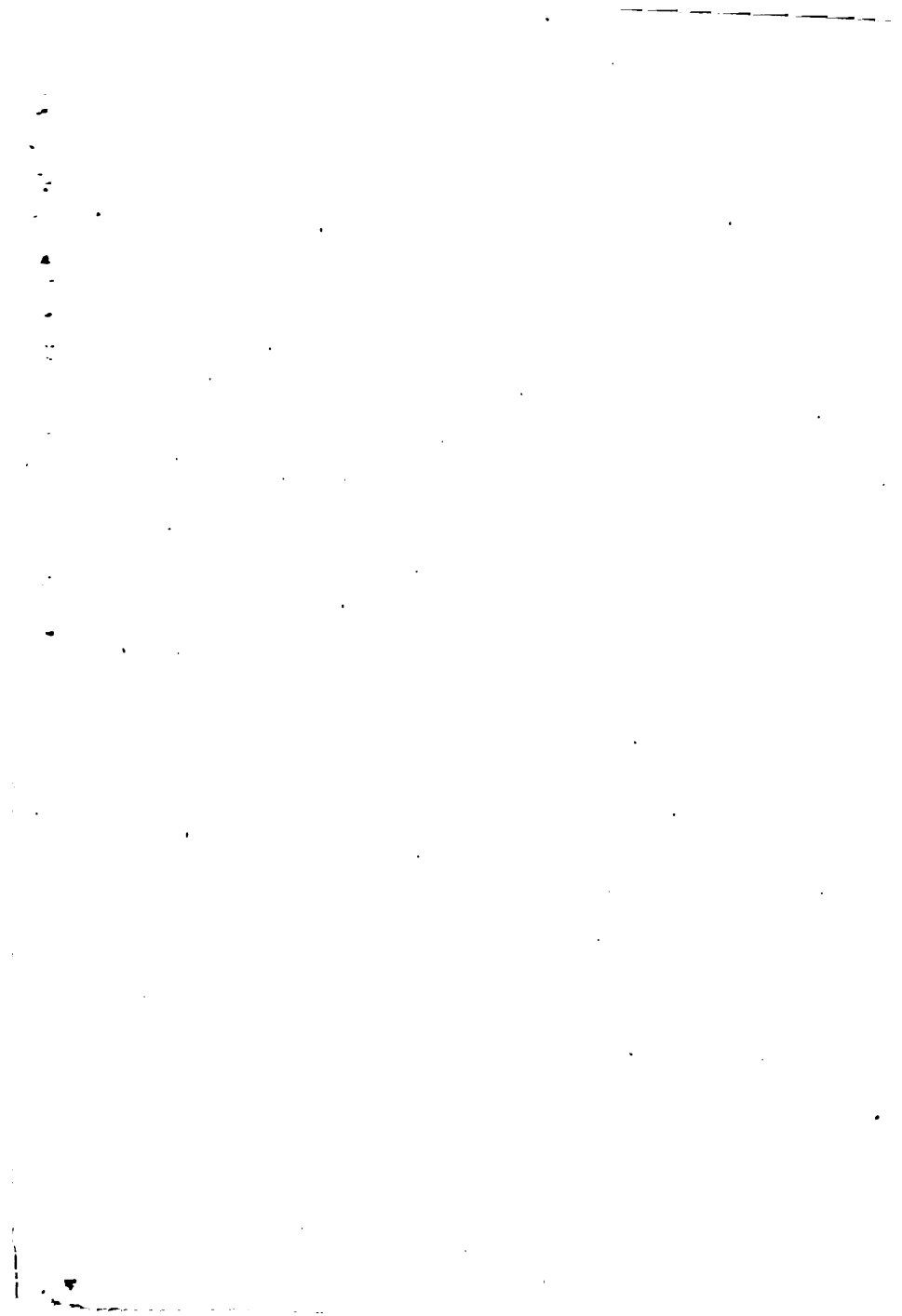


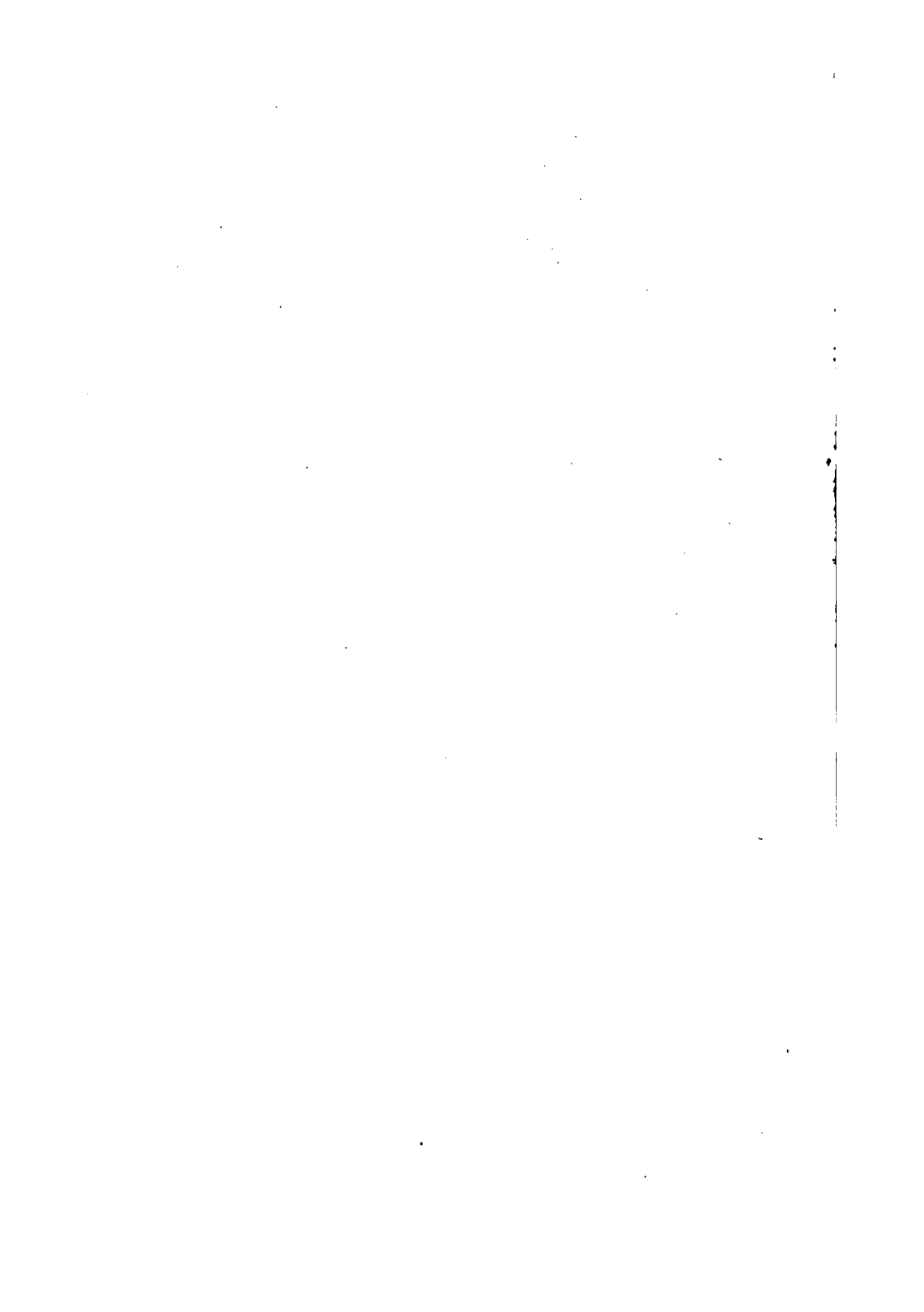
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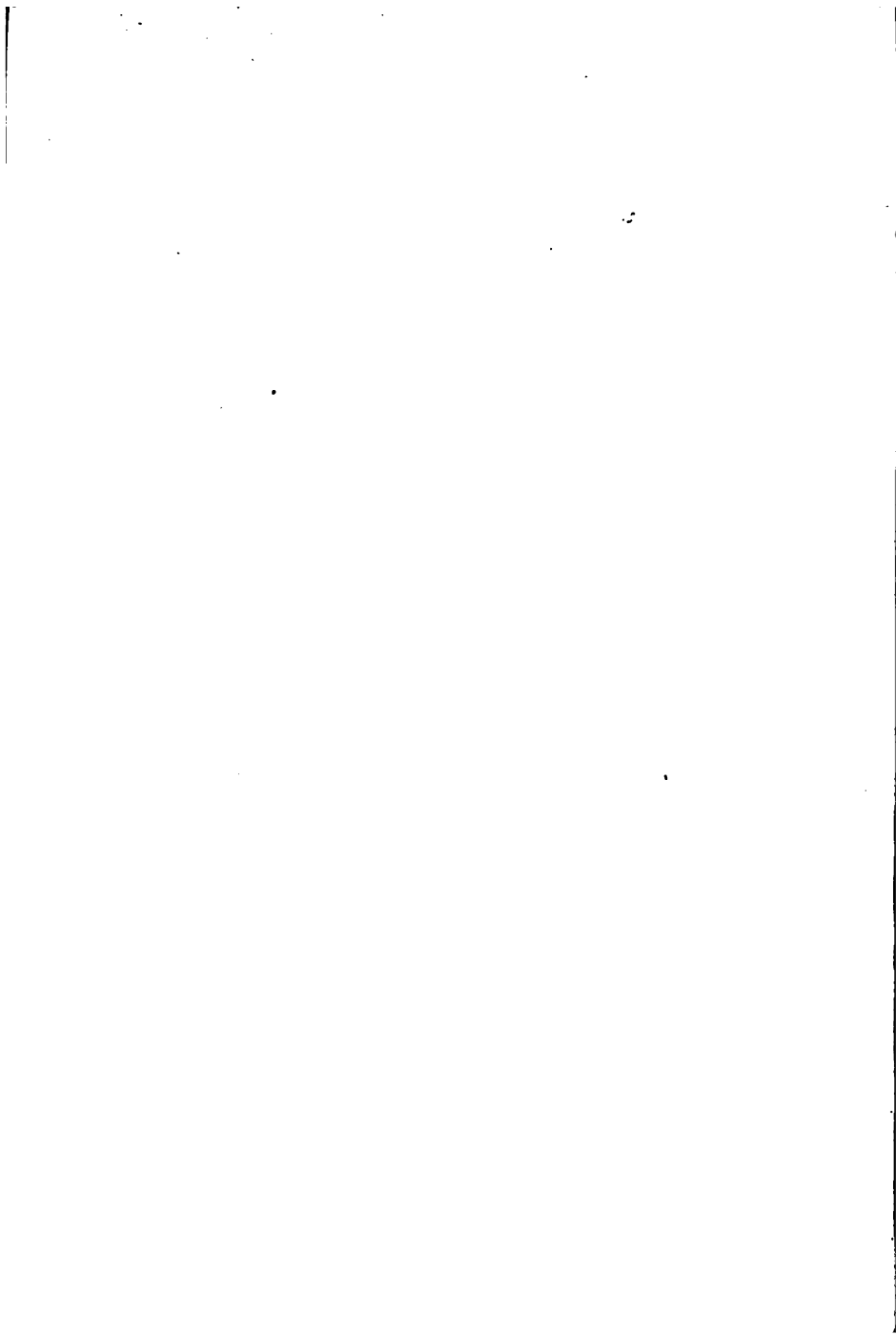
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**LO, AND BEHOLD YE!**









Shan O'Quinn's golden hearth.

# LO, AND BEHOLD YE!

BY

**SEUMAS MACMANUS**

*Author of "Donegal Fairy Stories," "In Chimney Corners,"  
"Yourself and the Neighbors," etc.*

**WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS BY**

**MABEL HATT**



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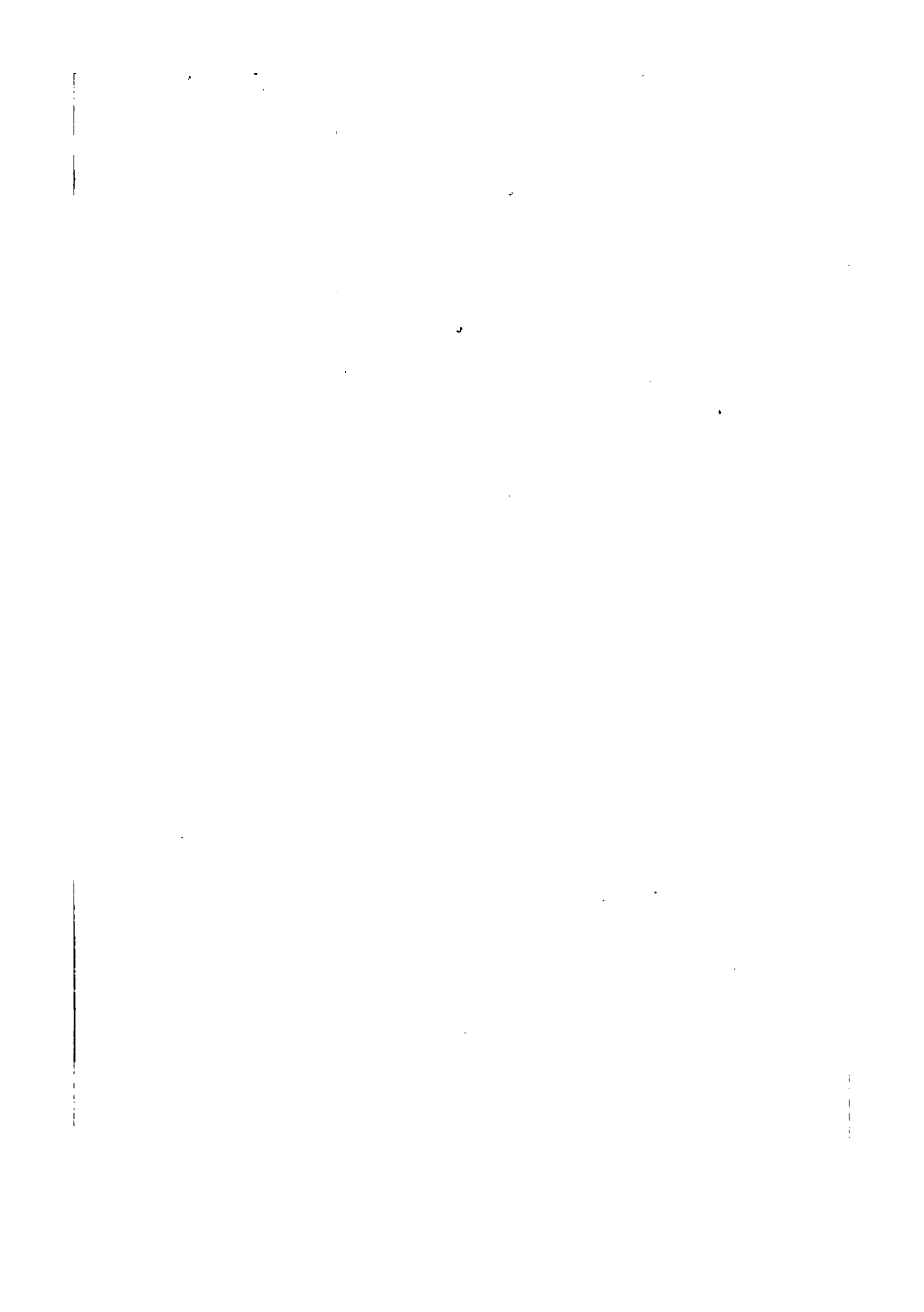
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THOUGH THESE BE IRREVERENT DAYS WHEN  
ROYALTIES ARE YANKED FROM THEIR GOLDEN  
CHAIRS, AND SACRILEGIOUSLY SLUNG INTO THE  
DISCARD, I, BRAVELY UNASHAMED TO RECKON  
CROWNED AND SCEPTERED ONES AMONG MY  
FRIENDS MOST HONORED, DELIBERATELY DEDI-  
CATE THIS BOOK TO A PRINCE BY DIVINE RIGHT  
— EVEN ALMOST AN IRISHMAN —

**BARTLETT ARKELL**

TO WHOM THE LOWLY OBEISANCE OF  
SEUMAS MACMANUS



## HARK YE!

On many a merry night by the bright turf-fire of my father, Pat MacManus (God rest him!), or round Shan O'Quinn's golden hearth, or in Jimminy Mor's cricket-haunted chimney corner—and on many a glorious day (heigh-ho!) 'mid the story-crowned fells and *sidhe* \*-haunted dells of royal Donegal—heard I most of these (thousand-year old) tales, dreamt a few of them, and, with warp of dream and weft of tradition, wove the remainder.

So often, now, have I chanted them—both in the shadowy glens of the Old Land, and on the shimmering plains of the New,—that, as will happen with story-tellers, the memory is long lost me of what in them is fact, and what is fiction. For me they have all grown gospel-true.

Once, a Great Man asked me, How comes it that one can always win, here, faith from our most faithless for the wildest of your tales? And I truthfully told him, Because they are true.

\* Pronounced *shee*—the Fairies.

Should it be your sad lot, my friend, to have lost those two ultimate God-gifts, the laughter of a child and the belief of a child, then salutary will it be for your sorrowful soul, if, though it be only for the brief moment that you are closing this book, you laugh from your heart, and believe again.

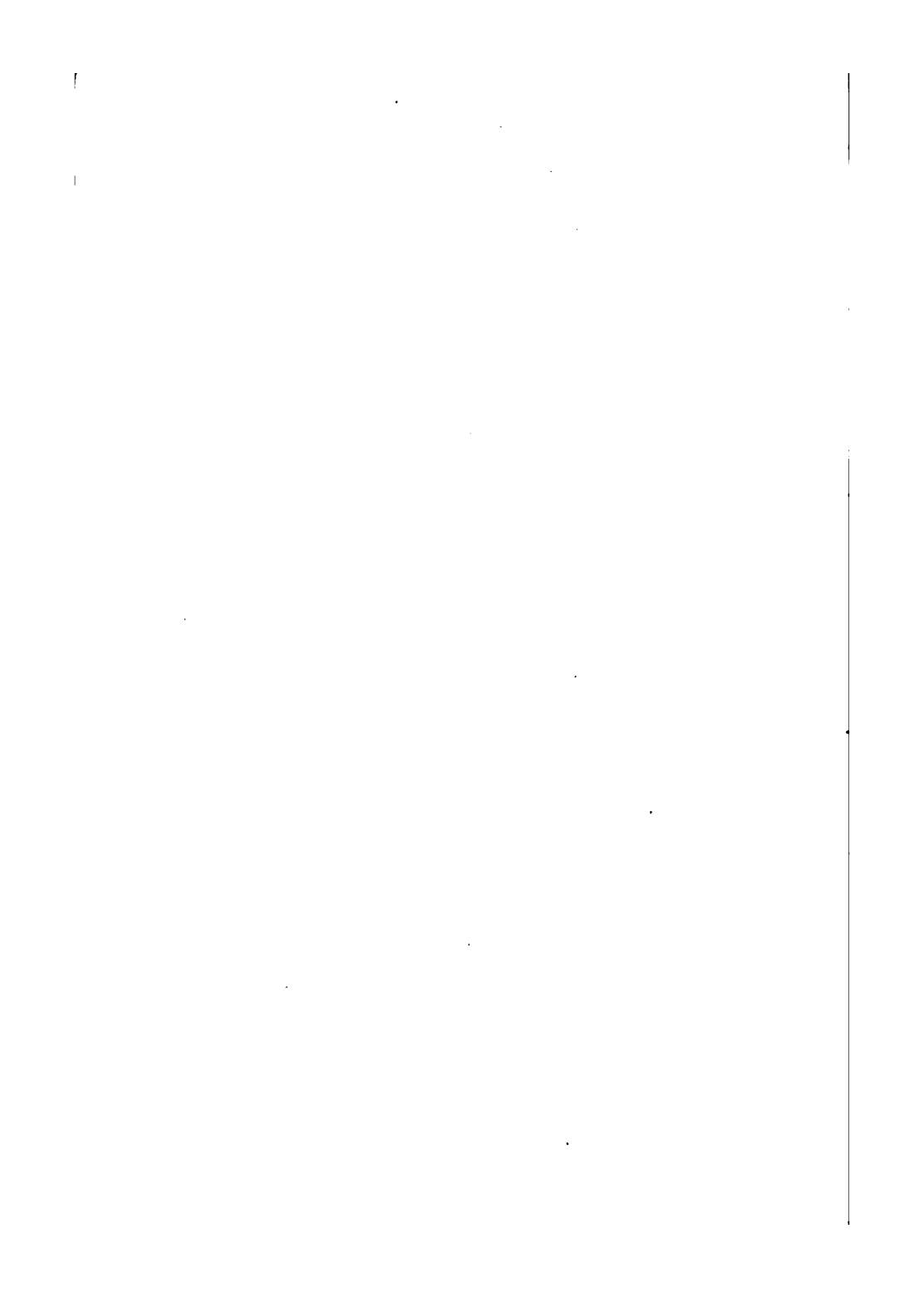
And may God and Mary bless you! and Patrick, Bridget, and Colm Cille, with white candles, light your feet when you come to walk the Dark Boreen!

*Seumas Mac Manus  
of Donegal.*

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**LO, AND BEHOLD YE!**



# LO, AND BEHOLD YE!

## I

### THE MAD MAN, THE DEAD MAN, AND THE DEVIL

**O**N the Nor'aist side of the hill of Ballyharney in Ireland are three brave sizable cuts of land, runnin' from the spot where the hill butts the sky down to the straim that is forever and ever croonin' an old Irish tune past its foot—an' these three sizable strips of land make three brave farms that are known for fifty mile on every side by sorra other name, fame, or title, than The Mad Man's Farm, The Dead Man's Farm, and The Divil's—and each succeeding son that heirs the land is known as Johnny the Mad Man, Mickey the Dead Man, Danny the Divil—or whatever their Christian name may be.

An' 'tis the wonderful story entirely it is, how these three farms first come by their comical names that'll stick to them while green grass

grows, water flows, and Terry Lannigan has a bend in his elbow.

Maybe 'tis a hundred years ago now, maybe it is more and maybe it is less since there were three brothers, Conal, Donal, and Teague, who owned and worked the three farms which their father had split up among them—and they were married to three neighborin' women who were three sisters—and wise, able, witty women they were, more betoken, their bate not to be found by a man on a racehorse on the 21st of June. There was wan day that the three sisters met at the Fair of Farny and foregathered in a public inn for to swap the news and gossip about their husbands and to ate a bite that would keep the lonesomeness from their stomachs till they got home again. And when they got served, says the waiter, says he, who attended on them, "Who pays for this?" and says one of them, winkin' at the others, "Oh! the Lord above 'ill pay."

Off the *gomer* of a waiter goes, and up-stairs with him three steps at a time, to Lord Kilcar who was the landlord of all the country side and who, at that minute, was enjoyin' a dinner and a bottle of wine overhead. And in three shakes of a lamb's lug, the Lord Kilcar, mad as seventeen hatters,

### MAD MAN, DEAD MAN, AND DEVIL 3

was down to the room the women were refreshin' in.

"What! what!" says he. "What is the meanin' of this impidence! Why do you presume to think me such a fool as to pay for the dinners of three huzzies that I never seen afore?"

The three of them were heartily amused at the *gomer* of a waiter's mistake, and says the woman again, winkin' at the others, "We didn't take you to be any bigger fool than the rest of the men. Ye are all much of a muchness, like Johnny Doolin's 'tatties the year they failed."

"Are ye married women?" says the Lord.

"Of course we are," says they.

"An' did ye stop to think how you reflect on the misfortunate men who own ye?" says he.

"All men are fools," says the first woman, "the only difference bein' that the men who own us are the biggest fools of the lot."

"Who are the misfortunate men?" says Lord Kilcar.

"They are your three tenants on Ballyharney Hill," says they, "Conal, Donal, and Teague."

"The three wisest men in the barony," says the Lord. "And by the powers, I'll make you prove your words or pay for them! Within a week from now, if you haven't proved to me and the



#### 4. LO, AND BEHOLD YE!

worl' that your three men are three fools, I'll dispossess each and all, of your farms on Ballyharney Hill and laive you the worl' for your pillow."

Not a morsel daunted, the first woman says to him, "An' if we do prove it, what'll be our reward?"

"I'll give you," says the Lord, "the farms you sit in, free from all rent, cess, cut, or tax forevermore. I might with aisy conscience promise you all I'm worth in the worl' for ye'll never claim it," says he.

"Don't halloo till ye're out of the wood," says the witty one, says she, winkin' again at the other pair who winked back to her—for there wasn't a funnier, jokin'er or heartier or wittier three women in the whole parish or the next to it than these same three sisters. Lord Kilcar heartily shook hands with them over the bargain and in admiration for their bravery, settled their bill with the waiter.

And the three women trudged home light-hearted and happy. Now Conal, and Donal, and Teague were three men who used to ait a hearty dinner and lie down to take a right hearty sleep after. On the very next day when Conal was taking his hearty sleep after his dinner, his wife whitened him with flour and wound him up in a

## MAD MAN, DEAD MAN, AND DEVIL 5

white sheet and streaked him for dead, and dhraped the bed, and set lighted candles by his head and feet. And when Donal was asleep in his own house at the same time, his wife, she got a pot of black paint and made a black man out of him with red rings round the eyes, red horns on him, and red corners to his mouth. And Teague's wife, the third woman, gave her husband for his dinner, 'tatties which she told him were cabbages and a white trout which she told him was a pig's cheek and a jug of buttermilk, which she told him was a jug of punch. He, at first, laughed at her, but when he seen that she was as grave as a preacher, he got mad with her, an' told her either she was gone crazy or else he was gone crazy—an' he went off to his sleep in a tanthrum.

When Conal awoke and looked 'round him, and seen first the candles lit and the bed dhraped and then that he was wrapped in a shroud, he let a bellow out of him and "Molly! Molly!" he cried. Molly ran into the room and says he, "What's the matter with me, Molly?"

"Whist!" says Molly, says she, "and lie down with ye. Don't ye know that ye're dead?"

"Dead!" says he. "What are ye blatherin' about, Molly? Wasn't I livin' when I went to sleep, not half-an-hour ago?"

"Ay, poor fellow, God rest ye," says she, "an' 'tis many's the poor dead man had the same story to tell—Och, och, och!" says she, coverin' her face with her apron and her body shakin' all over. "Och, och, och! the Lord pity me so sudden left a widda!"

"Molly, Molly!" says Conal, in terrible alarm. "What nonsense are ye sayin', anyway?"

"And," says Molly, says she, her face still buried in her apron and her body goin' like a quakin' bog, "'tis the kind man you were to me, Conal, when ye were in this life, and I hope the Lord will dale gently with you in the worl' you're now in."

"Quit your blatherskite and bosh," says Conal, says he, "or ye'll drive me mad if ye don't stop it." He gave one bound out of the bed and ran to the lookin'-glass; an' when he sees himself there, all white and ghastly, he put a screech out of him.

"Molly," says he, "dear, dear Molly, you don't raily mean for to say for I'm dead?"

"Yes, poor fellow, God help ye!" says she. "Died paicefully and sweetly last night on the stroke of midnight. Mickey, the carpenter, took your measure this mornin' and I'm expectin' your wooden shuit any minute, an' as it would be most unbecomin' and unseemly for any daicent corp to

## MAD MAN, DEAD MAN, AND DEVIL 7

be seen wanderin' this way, I beg of you, poor fellow, to compose yourself on the bed again."

"Och, och, och!" says Conal, says he, "ye can't raily mean it, Molly, that I'm dead out an' out?"

"When you were in this worl', Conal," says Molly, says she, "it was the divil's own job to convince ye of anything and I see that the other worl' hasn't improved ye—but," says she, "if you do not believe me, look out of the window." And the minute he did, he put out of him a screech that a'most tore away a piece of the roof and says he, "The divil! the divil!"

"Yes, poor fellow," says Molly, "all I could do with ye when ye were in this life, you would persist in card playing on Sundays and here's the divil, now, sure enough comin' for ye."

For when the other brother Donal had woke from his sleep, and his wife, pretendin' to be in a terrible fright, told him he wasn't her man Donal at all, at all, but the divil; and that he, after bally-raggin' her for takin' laive of her senses, looked in the glass and saw himself the dead spit of the divil in appearance, anyhow, he didn't know what under the heavens had happened to him—but as he always went to his elder brother Conal to help him in his difficulties, with a leap and a skip, he was out of the house and at top speed headin' for Co-

nal's, thinkin' he'd get Conal to tell him truly was he the divil or was he not.

Now Conal, when he saw the divil comin' after him, gave a leap and a screech and out of the house headlong, headin' like a hare for Teague's house for protection. When Donal saw him run away from him, he shouted piteously for him, "Conal, Conal, wait for me, I want ye." Conal, he let an unearthly screech out o' him at this, an' "Sure enough," says the poor fella to himself, "I'm a dead man an' worse, when the divil's wantin' me,"—and he doubled his speed to get away from him.

"Conal, Conal, wait for me." Donal would shout, and Conal each time would screech louder and run faster.

"Sure enough," at last says poor Donal, says he to himself, "I am the divil, when Conal, whom I believed to be my brother, is frightened by me into fits."

Teague, poor man, was wakened from his sleep by a crash like the crack of doom when his brother Conal broke through the door. And he sat up in bed with his eyes the size of small saucers, starin' at the vision.

"What under the sun is the meanin' of these shouts?" says poor Teague. "Or, what in the name of wondhers has come over ye, Conal?"

## MAD MAN, DEAD MAN, AND DEVIL 9

“Save me, Teague, save me,” says poor Conal, says he. “I’m dead—died last night and the divil is at me heels wantin’ to fetch me with him.” Into the house burst Donal this instant. Conal dived under the bed for to hide from him and Teague, havin’ seen a dead man walk and talk, and now seein’ the devil likewise, dhropped on the broad of his back, sayin’, “Aye, the Lord help me, the poor woman was right after all; an’ I must be crazy complete.”

The next instant he jumps up sayin’, “Why do they let me run loose this way, a danger to the public? ’Tisn’t here I should be but in the madhouse. I’m more sensible in this, at least, than them who think themselves sane.”

“And I’m sure,” says Donal, says he, “that I have sense enough to know ’tisn’t here I should be but in Hell.”

“And,” says Conal, shovin’ his head from under the bed, “I’m very sure ’tisn’t undher the bed is the place for me—but daicently in my grave. It’s scandalous,” says he, “to have me like this.”

So, off the three of them started, every one his own way to go to his own right place.

And when Teague come to the madhouse, the keeper, when he talked to him a minute, agreed that he must be one of the maddest men he had

ever seen, but, "At the same time," says he, "I can not let you in here without a magistrate's order."

As Lord Kilcar was a magistrate, Teague then headed for him.

Now Conal never stopped till he was at the graveyard, and he told the grave-digger there that he came to be buried. The poor grave-digger, all alarmed, tried to persuade Conal that it was livin' he was, and not dead; but Conal got so mad angry at the fellow's perversity that he was in mind to give the grave-digger the father and mother of a soun' thrashing.

"Well," says the grave-digger, at last, "I never can bury a body without a certificate of death. You'll have to go to Lord Kilcar who signs the certificates."

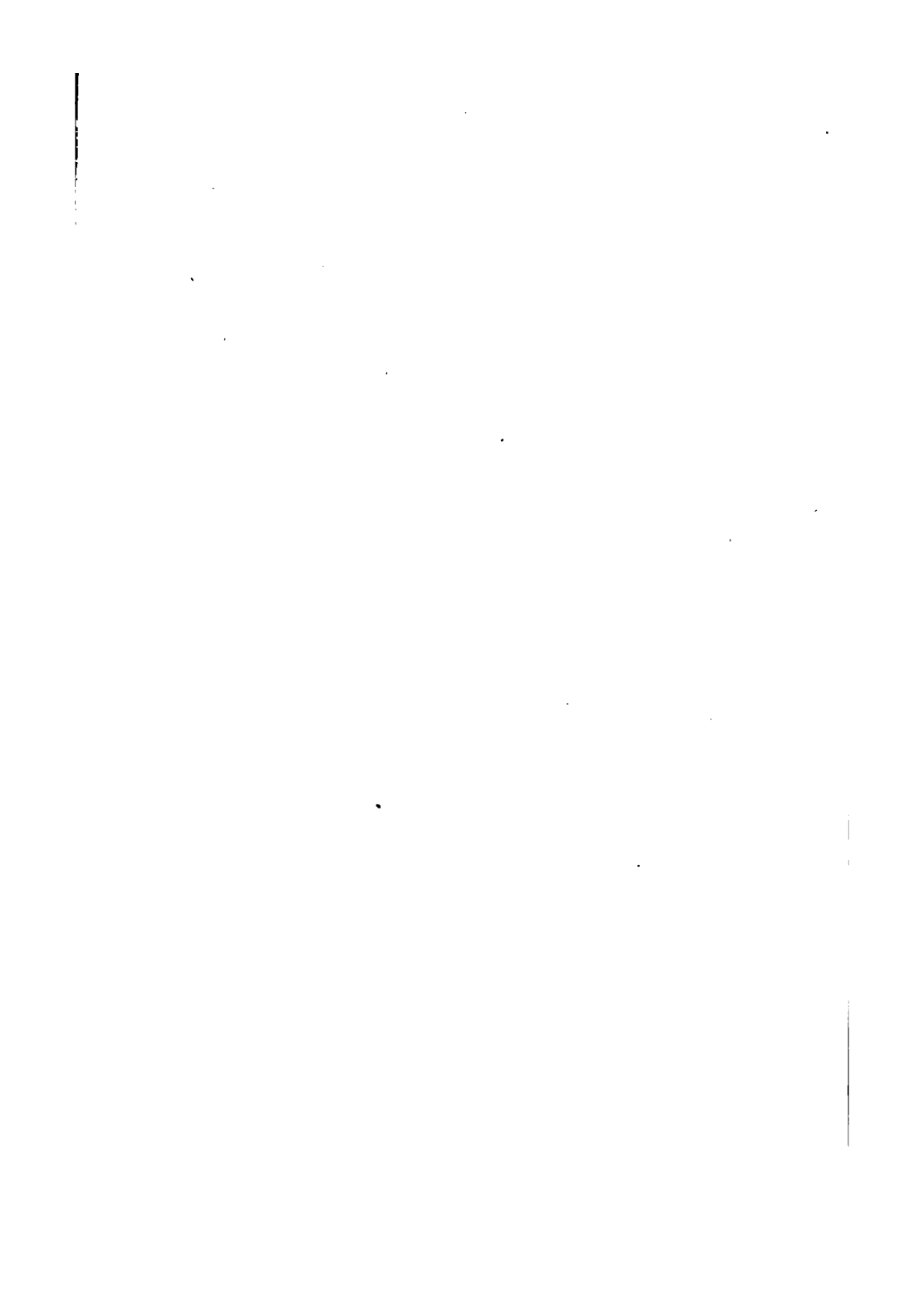
So off Conal started to get his death certificate from Lord Kilcar.

Now Donal when he started off to go to his place, soon remembered that he had forgot where exactly it was located, so he tried several houses inquiren' the way to Hell. And the people flew out of the doors and windows and chimneys and the whole countryside was runnin' hurry-scurry over hill and dale, with the black fellow pursuin' them and beggin' them, for Heaven's sake, to direct him on the right way to Hell. At



**"None of us is larned enough in joggraphy to direct  
you."—Page 11.**





## MAD MAN, DEAD MAN, AND DEVIL 11

last, one poor fellow that he had cornered and couldn't escape him, told him, "None of us is larned enough in joggraphy to direct you. You'll have to go to Lord Kilcar for that."

So off for Lord Kilcar Donal likewise headed.

Lord Kilcar, dumbfounded, didn't know whether it was his head or his heels he was on, when the three crazy craitures, all arrivin' together, marched in on him, one beggin' an order that he'd admit him to the lunatic asylum and the other askin' Lord Kilcar to make a daicent man of him by givin' him a certificate of death that would satisfy the grave-digger, and the third, beseechin' that he'd give him the proper directions how to reach Hell.

"'Tis onchristianlike," says Donal, "that yous let a poor divil wandher here, friendless and forlorn, and won't tell him the way to his own country."

"And," says Conal, says he, "I wouldn't complain so much myself only the weather is so hot that it'll not be good for man or baste if I'm left above ground much longer."

"And," says Teague, says he, shakin' his head, "I'm secin' such strange things these times that I'm not allowed into the madhouse right quickly

and into the strongest strait waistcoat they have, I'll not be responsible for what I may do."

"Bad luck to you," says Conal, says he, hittin' Teague a *poltoque* of his fist in the stomach, "you can't be in the madhouse too soon. Haven't ye sense enough to stand off my corn?"

"Ye dirty corp, ye!" says Teague, says he, lettin' go a *poltoque* at Conal. "'Tis small wonder there's madmen in the worl' when thè likes o' you are allowed to wander above ground."

"'Tisn't half so bad as the likes of ye to be allowed loose, ye lunatic, ye!" says Conal, reachin' a *poltoque* back again for Teague. "May the divil take ye!"

"Whist, whist! ye should behave yourselves like Christians, ye two onmannerly bears, ye!" says Donal, stepping in to make paice. "Whist! whist! or I'll carry the two of ye to Hell!"

"Gentlemen! gentlemen! for all sakes," says the poor frightened Lord Kilcar, "keep peace and do not make smithereens o' my house. Conal, and Donal and Teague," says he, "there is some sad mistake. Go back home to your wives and childer like daicent sensible men."

But when the three of them heard that, they raised an uproar greater than the Fair o' Farney.

## MAD MAN, DEAD MAN, AND DEVIL 13

“Will you deny a poor graveless corp his certificate of death?” says Conal.

“Do you refuse a friendless poor mad man an order on the madhouse?” says Teague.

“Will you be so onchristianlike,” says Donal, “as not to direct a poor divil the way to Hell?”

Poor Lord Kilcar was distracted and didn't know what for to do at all, at all. They'd neither hold their tongues nor take their laive and the clamor and the clang was every minute growin' louder and louder, one of them striving to raise his voice higher than the other, beggin' each for his own requirement till at long and at last, the poor Lord seen that he must send for their wives to quiet them and put some sense into their heads.

So he asked Conal, and Donal, and Teague to be patient and sit down quiet for an hour's time and he'd have everything they wanted ready for them agin' then.

“If I've got to wait an hour,” says Conal, “it would be most onseemly for a sthranger to come and see me sittin' in a chair. I must have a coffin to wait in.”

“And,” says Teague, “I'm sure it would be every bit as onseemly for a sthranger to come in and find me here loose. I must be locked and bolted in a padded room.”

“And,” says Donal, “do you think I have no shame in me at all, at all? If I’ve got to wait an hour, I must be let sit on the coals.”

Lord Kilcar, poor man, and he all distracted, had to lay Conal in a wooden pigs’ trough with another pigs’ trough over him and he had to put Teague locked in the cupboard. And he got a coal stove painted red, and Donal mounted it with light heart, and as he hunkered there, huggin’ himself, says he, “And they tried to persuade me I wasn’t the devil. This red hot stove doesn’t take a feather out of me.”

And that is how the three lads were when their wives arrived and Lord Kilcar entreated them with all haste for to take away these three lunatics of husbands that they had and to take also the law papers that he had now ready, grantin’ them their lands rent free, while winds blew and cocks crew. “I heartily agree,” says he, “that you’ve proved your three husbands to be as three great fools as walks the worl’—an’ I’m only afeered that if I don’t get ye away from about me, quick and fast, you’ll prove meself the biggest fool of the four.”

“What’ll ye give us, if we do?” says Conal’s wife, winkin’ at the others. Says the poor man, distracted and tremblin, “I’ll give ye one hundred pounds apiece to stock your free lands, if ye’ll only

## MAD MAN, DEAD MAN, AND DEVIL 15

promise to go off instantly, and take off your husbands, and never to come next or near me again—Here ye are.” And every one of the women along with the title deeds to her property got a hundred pound check. And to Lord Kilcar’s joy, they led off their three husbands. And within twenty-four hours, they had these same husbands soberer and wiser men than ever they had been in their lives afore. On their freehold lands, in comfort, aise and content, they reared up large families that were a joy and a credit to them. And they died, bequeathin’ to the worl’ for a legacy, the sure knowledge that tho all men are fools, every woman can make her own husband the greatest fool of them all—and she can also, if she chooses (which thank Heaven she generally does), make him the wisest and happiest, most contented man on the worl’s ridge.

Their farms were bequeathed to their eldest sons and again to their eldest sons after them, and so on down. Each heir in turn is nick-named for his greatest ancestor, the Mad Man, or The Dead Man, or The Divil, and the three farms are, to this day, and ever will be, known as The Mad Man’s Farm, The Dead Man’s Farm, and The Divil’s.

## II

### THE QUEEN'S CONQUEST

'**T**WAS in the faraway times, when kings were plentiful, happenin's wonderfuller, and women wittier, ten times, than they are in these God-forgotten days, that this merry happenin' happened.

Colm was the name the king went by, who then over-reigned Ireland's north-end—an' a fine man an' brave king he was, barrin' some shortcomin's.

Now Colm was still a young man and hadn't married a wife, by reason that, though he was ten years searchin' her, he couldn't get a woman to his pleasement. He was a mighty admirer of wit (though he was no wit himself), and he'd have no woman that wasn't as witty as she was comely, and the best of both. People at last agreed that he'd never find the woman he wanted, and begun to regard him as a convicted old bachelor.

Colm was for ten years warring on the King o' Connaught, and both of them were such able gen-

erals that neither could outmatch the other, and by all signs an' tokens, the war'ud last as long as they'd live. Says Colm, says he, "If I had only a spy clever enough to know the heart secrets of the King of Connaught, I'd very soon end the war." But, though he sent the cunningest of his picked men into Connaught for to find out the King's secrets, no one could contrive the plan that would bring him success.

Finally, King Colm sent word through his kingdom that to the man who could put him on the plan of readin' the King of Connaught's heart a hundred poun' would be given. For three months after, his castle was throngeder than a circus, with people pushin' and crushin' an' crowdin' an' shovin', each wantin' to put his own pet plan afore the King; but instead of rewardin' them with goold, he was nearer givin' them the gallows—for one plan was stupider than the other, an' the best of them would shame a *haveril*.\*

Now, lo and behold ye! when all others had gone away from the castle, with their heads an' their hearts as low as their heels, there was one old man named Feargal, from not many miles away, who came in an' said he wished to see the King. Colm gave him an audience and asked him

\* Half-wit.



what he wanted. Says Feargal, says he, "'Tis to tell you that the near-cut to the King of Connaught's heart is through the heart of his lady's maid." Bedad, Colm, when he heard this, slapped his leg. Says he to the attendant: "Pay this old man his reward, and send me instantaneously the smartest man in all me army."

The cleverest soldier come to Colm, and he got his orders, an' was sent into Connaught in disguise. There he made love to the lady's maid of the Queen of Connaught. The lady's maid, to be sure, knew all her mistress's secrets, and her mistress knew all her master's, and the lady's maid's lover, in less than a fortnight, had all the secrets of the whole court of Connaught. Back with him he came to King Colm. And within six weeks after, the war was ended, the King of Connaught defeated, and Colm cock o' the walk.

As soon as the war was ended, says Colm, says he, to his generals and great men, "The next move is for to get married."

"Who are you goin' to marry?" says they.

"The wittiest woman in Ireland," says he—"the woman who defeated the King of Connaught."

"Is it the ravin' that's come over you, King?" says they. "Sure 'twas yourself that defeated the

King of Connaught, an' 'twas the old man, Feargal, that put the wit your way."

Says the King: "That wit was never the wit of a man, old or young—'twas the wit of a woman, an' I'm goin' to find out immaidately who she is, an' marry her."

The generals and the wise men were flabbergasted. But they couldn't say anything. They went with him in his search for Feargal, and they found him in his field, plantin' potatoes. Says the King, says he, "Me man, who was it advised you the near-cut to the King of Connaught's heart?"

"'Twas my daughter Saav," says he.

"Right!" says the King, lookin' at his generals and wise men. "Did I know what I was talkin' about or did I not?"

And they admitted that he surely did.

"Take me to see your daughter," says the King.

And when Saav was put out afore him, she was a comely young woman sure enough, even though she was dressed in poor clothes an' went barefoot.

"Me girl," says the King, says he, "I want you to go immediately an' leave your measure for a silken suit at my expense, for you're goin' to marry me."

"I don't think I am," says she, as cool as a trout in a pool.

The generals an' wise men, an' the King himself, were dumbfounded.

"What!" says Colm, says he. "Do you, a poor, penniless girl, refuse to be made Queen an' my wife?"

"That's just what I do refuse," says she.

"And for why?" says Colm, ready to drop with amazement.

"Just because I'm poor an' penniless," says she. "I'm not your equal. And the day would come," says she, "when you'd take offense at me, an' upcast to me that I was only come of beggars, an' you were a fool to take me."

"Make your mind aisy," says the King, says he, "if that's all that's a-trouble to it. That day'll never come, an' my tongue'll never be guilty of such a mean upcast."

"But it will come," says she. "And another thing—it's foolish for to marry any woman for her wit. If a woman's wit wins you, 'tis her wit in the end that'll drive you away. So would it be with you and me. They," says she, "that never come in of the King's door, can never be thrust out of the King's door."

"That'll never happen," says the King, says he.

"I swear to ye that all the powers of earth wouldn't make me drive ye away. And I'll not have paice, aise, or content till you, the ablest woman in all Ireland, are my wife and Queen."

"Well," says Saav, says she, after he had begged, beseeched, and entraited for hours, and wouldn't be put off nohow—"Well," says she, "if I consent to become your wife, it'll be only on condition."

"Name the condition," says the King. "'Tis granted before it's asked."

"It is," says Saav, says she, "that on the day you turn me out of your castle, I'm to be allowed to take with me any three back-burdens that I choose of the most valuable things in the castle."

"It's certainly an aisy condition," says the King, says he, "and one that you'll never need to call on. But it's granted, all the same."

"Well," says Saav, says she, "we'll see what we'll see. Meantime you can fix up the weddin'."

Now the King, I said, had a few little short-comin's; an' these same couldn't escape the keen insight of the witty Saav. No more could his virtues. She saw that he was selfish where his own comforts were concerned, and unjust where his own feelin's entered in, and oftentimes boastful an' arrogant—but was still a good-hearted man

behind it all, and had in him the makin's of a fine character. When she consented to take him, she did so because she considered she had the ability to cure his peccadillies, an' make out of him a man whom she'd have raison to be proud of.

They were wedded well an' good, an' a great weddin' it was—with the King of Connaught, and fifty other kings that paid tribute to the proud Colm, in attendance, with their queens, their lords an' ladies, and the nobles of their court. And the weddin' lasted nine days an' nine nights, an' the last day an' night were better than the first. The King was a proud man of the bride he had got, as handsome as she was witty, and she as far outshone the wives of all the other Kings there as the moon does the stars.

'Twas on the last day of the weddin' that, the supply of apples in the women's quarter runnin' out (because it was June, when good apples are rare an' hard to find), Queen Saav sent a message to the King's quarters, askin' His Majesty to send them another bag of apples. Now, apples were the King's favorite fruit, and there was no wan thing in the worl' he enjoyed better, barrin' that delicate rarity known as Boxy-bread: so he told the Queen's messenger to go back an' give his compliments, an' say he was sorry, but the last of

the old apples were gone, an' the new crop wasn't ripe for a month yet.

When this message come to the Queen, she knew at once 'twas a lie, for he always kept some bags of apples in reserve for himself. She said to the messenger: "Go to my matron in the kitchen, and get her to butter you six plates of fresh, hot, sweet-smellin' Boxyty-bread an' bring them to the King with my compliments."

When the six plates of sweet-smellin', mouth-waterin' Boxyty-bread came under the King's nose, it softened his heart, an' opened it so wide that he instantly ordered his steward to send to the Queen two bags of apples.

When the Queen saw the apples comin', she smiled, and says she, "I thought as much." Then she sent back her messenger direct to the King for to tell him, aloud, in the hearin' of his comrades, that she was most grateful to him not only for the handsome gift, but also for the new knowledge that Boxyty-bread made magnificent manure for apple-trees.

The King's comrades, when they heard this, started laughin' at the King, and didn't stop till mornin'. "Faith," says they, "your wife's the wit in earnest, an' she's not goin' to let you forget it, either."

The King, he pretended to laugh with them—a laugh that was as cheery as the rattle of stones on a coffin.

Colm told his wife, next day, that her wit was wondherful, indeed, but 'twould be well always to choose a proper time an' place for it. But, curiously, from that day forward, the King seldom let any one see a sign of the selfishness he used to be noted for.

The King and his Queen lived along happily, she reflectin' credit and glory *go leor* on him, and respected and loved and admired not only by all about the court, but all over the land likewise, wherever her fame spread—an' it spread both near an' far.

Now, when the King was out of his selfishness, the thing that pressed most on Saav, and kept her from bein' at paice, aise, and happiness, was the fact that he wasn't always just to his subjects, whenever his own pleasure was concerned. At last, it happened that he coveted a particularly handsome young filly, belongin' to a poor man in the mountains; and he had his steward drive it into his own park. Next day, when the poor man's son who owned the filly came before the King for to complain that the steward had stolen his filly, the King ordered him to be gone from his

sight, called him a rogue and rascal, and swore that the filly he claimed was his own breedin' and rearin'—reared of one of his own chestnuts. Whereas, the rale fact was that in all his stables the King hadn't a mare at all, at all.

The poor boy, not knowin' whether he was gladder for escapin' with his life or sorrier for losin' his filly, was quittin' the castle in tears when the Queen sent a private messenger after him and brought him to her chambers. She gave him a fishin' rod and sent him to take his sait on top of the wall of the King's ball-alley, and act accordin' to her directions.

Now, the King and his courtiers always went into the flagged ball-alley to play hand-ball for an hour before dinner; and this day when himself and his courtiers came there, lo and behold you, the chap was sittin' on top of the wall with a fishin' rod, and line, and flies, complete, an' he makin' as if he was doin' desperate fishin' on the flags of the ball-alley! . . . Well, the courtiers, to be sure, put their hands on their sides, and roared with laughin' at the idiot on the wall; and the King, half mad, asked him what the divil he thought he was doin' there!

"Fishin' for salmon," says the lad on the wall, says he. And then the courtiers roared again.



Says the King, madder than ever at any subject of his bein' such a fool: "When do you expect to catch a salmon in the King's ball-alley?"

And says the lad on top of the wall, says he, givin' his line another cast: "I expect to catch a salmon in the King's ball-alley the first day that the King's horse has another foal." The minute the courtiers heard that, they put out o' them a roar of a laugh that was heard ten hills away. They had been present that mornin' when the King claimed the filly as his own breedin' an' rearin'; and now, if the heads were to be cut off them, they couldn't stop laughin' at the King.

"There's one person," says the King, says he, "and only one, could have put ye up to this trick, me lad—and that's my Queen."

"'Twas herself sure enough," says the lad, says he.

"Come down," says the King, says he, "from that wall. Take your filly off with ye, an' never let me sight either you or it again."

Then he went to the Queen's apartments, and met Saav, and raged at her, sayin' 'twas a nice how-do-ye-do that she would side with his enemies, and make him the laughin'-stock of his own courtiers an' the whole worl'. For, sure enough, the news of the ready way in which the King was

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cornered took short time to spread to all the other kings' courts in Ireland, and all the land laughed for three weeks. But if it did, the King took good care he gave his wife no further opportunity to have him laughed at for injustice, but became so scrupulously honest that the wags, in waggery, nicknamed him Colm the Just.

Saav was liking her King more and more, every day. And in troth, after he got over his irritation with her, Colm was likin' Saav more and more every day, too. And they were as happy as the day was long. They had a little son now that both of them doted on, and the King had his whole heart wrapped up in him. Only Saav had one regret. Notwithstanding all she would say, her King was still keepin' very vain of his great power, and very arrogant toward all that he had in undher him. He used to have special days appointed when all the other kings who were tributary to him would send ambassadors to put in their petitions, and to crave his forbearance, indulgence, and protection, and beseech favors of him. This day Colm would be so terribly vain and proud that even Saav could hardly stand him.

At last, on one of these great court days, all the ambassadors, and all the kings and chiefs, and many lords and ladies and nobles of the great court

and of the land were present in the audience chamber, where the King was receivin' them one and all, and listenin' to their petitions, and then vaingloriously tellin' each in turn to go back to his master, and notify him to be of good heart, for that he had Colm's approbation and wouldn't be harmed.

Among the crowd of great ones that were waitin' to represent their great masters was a poor priest in a faded coat, with a petition from a little flock of his, among the hills, who were badly oppressed by the King's servants' compellin' them to rear beagles for the King, and cruelly punishin' them if any of the beagles died or didn't thrive. Now when the Queen, whom Colm had seated on a throne on his left hand, had looked and listened in patience as long as she could, while Colm was cuttin' his vain canthrips, addressin' every ambassador in turn, she at last leant forward and waved her finger at the poor priest in the faded black coat, sayin', "Come up here, my poor man."

And the poor priest, whose heart was bursting with indignation for the oppression of his little flock, strode up the audience chamber with a high head, and a defiant look in his eye.

And says the Queen, when he had come up and

made his obadiance, says she—"Whose ambassador are you, my good man?"

"I'm God's ambassador," says he, straight back to her that way.

"Then," says Saav, and every one there had their ears cocked, "don't be afeared, my good man, but go back to your Master, and tell him to rejoice, and be of good cheer, for the great King Colm will neither himself deign, nor allow any one else, to harm a hair on his head."

The scene that was in that audience chamber then it bangs me for to describe. But anyhow the audience broke into mortal uproar. And every ambassador bawled with laughter all the way home to his own king again. And in a few days Ireland was from shore to shore shakin' with such uproarious hilarity as never was heard afore or since.

The anger of King Colm was fearful. 'Twas a fortnight before he could address himself to his Queen, or look her in the face and speak to her—and what he come to say to her then was, that she was a shame an' a disgrace to him, but sure what could he expect, anyhow, when he was such a notorious fool as ever to marry a beggar of a race of beggars. "Get up," says he, "and dress your-

self, and lave my sight and my castle for evermore."

"Very well and good, me lord," says Saav, says she. "I'm ready. I was prepared for this, as you'll remember, before ever I married you. But," says she, "you remember your agreement—three back-burdens of the greatest valuables I choose to carry out of your castle at my lavin'."

"Thirty-three," says he, "if you like. 'Twill be a cheap price to get rid of you."

"Thanky, me lord," says she. "I'll only ask three. And before I've got them out, maybe you'll think it's enough."

"What is the first back-burden you choose?" says he.

"A back-burden," says she, "of gold, silver, diamonds, and jewelry."

In a short time the King had a burden of them piled on her that near almost broke her back—and with it she went out over the drawbridge.

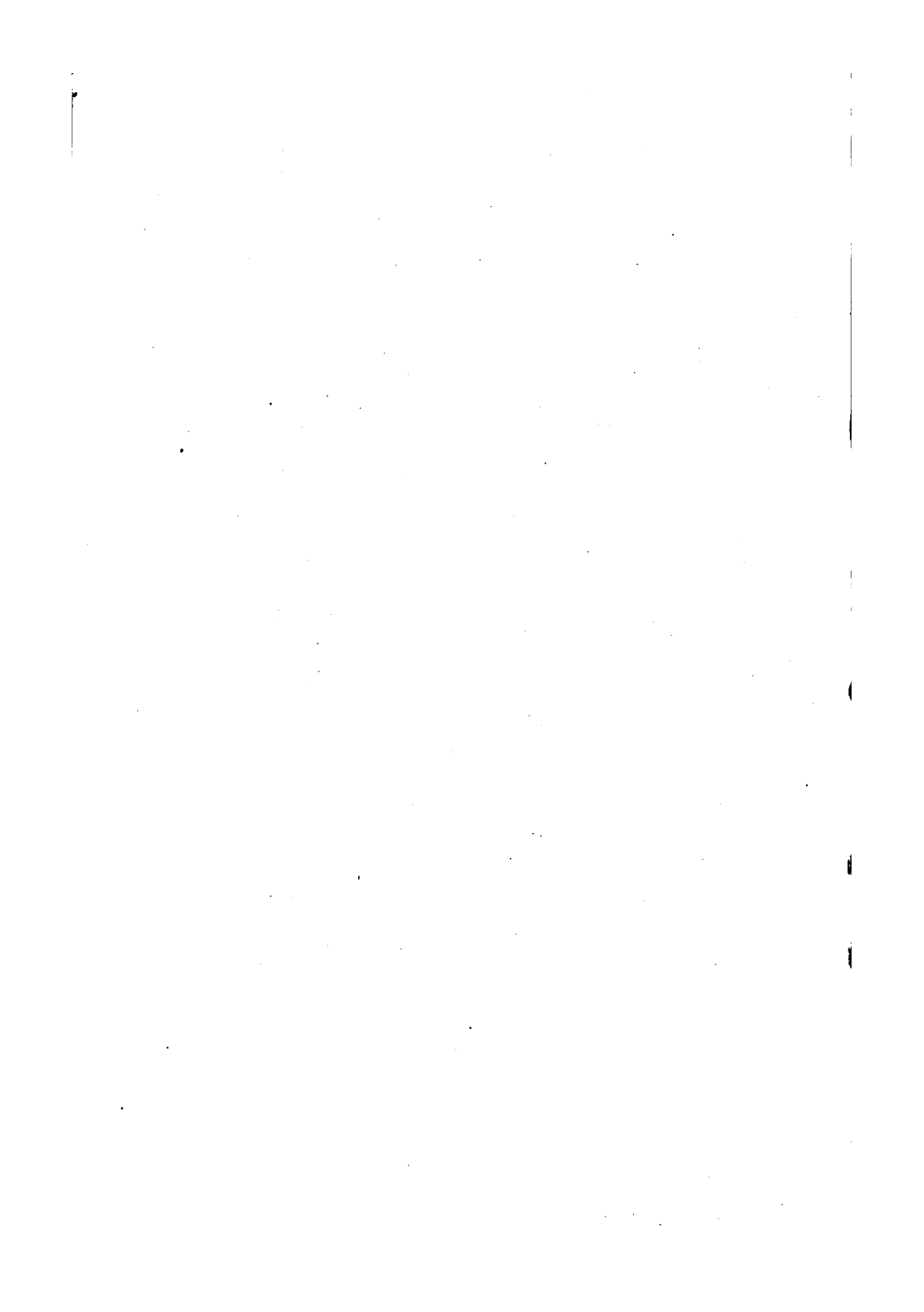
When she laid it down, and come back in again, says the King, says he, "What will your second back-burden be?"

"For my second back-burden," says she, "hoist up on me, our baby boy."

The King gave a groan. But he wasn't the man to be daunted afore any woman. He lifted the



"Says Saav, says she, 'Get on me back yourself.'"—Page 31.



boy in whom his heart was wrapp'd up, and, settin' his teeth hard, put him on Saav's shoulders. She carried him out over the drawbridge.

When she come back in again, says Colm, says he, "Now, then, name your third and last burden, and we're done with you for ever, thank God."

Says Saav, says she, "Get on me back yourself."

King Colm and his good Queen Saav lived ever after the happiest and most contented couple that Ireland in all its career witnessed—a parable for all kings and queens and married couples in the nation. Saav lived and died the wittiest, as her husband lived ever after and died the justest, and most generous, most reasonable, sensible, affable, and amiable king that Ireland ever knew.

'Twas the Queen's Conquest.



### III

#### DARK PATRICK'S BLOOD-HORSE

**T**HIS I am going to tell ye, happened in the far away time, when we had kings in Ireland—one for every province, a high king over all, and chieftains as many as March gales. Irishmen were sportsmen ever, but never more so than in them days. There was games of all sorts and sizes going, from June to January, here, there or yonder: and the gentry, as well you may suppose, had a gay time of it gallivanting from sport to sport over the country.

There's reason in all things, barrin' robbing the priest; but the games at this time went beyond the beyonts; and the gamblin' greed was eatin' up the justice that had, till then, been the first rule in Ireland. This cravin' for sport, like a bad fever, soon smit even the common people, and spoilt many a one of them who should have been looking after his livelihood when he was trotting the land from fair to fair, and from sport to sport, for-

gettin' a'most how to stick a spade in the ground; for as baron does beggar will copy.

Now, there was at this time in Donegal a little man who went by the name of Dark Patrick, by reason of a black beard and a black head of hair he carried, and eyebrows of the same material. A low-set, sturdy, modest little man, with a grave sort of look, he was, that a stranger might pass in a crowd and take small notice of. Still because of his uncommon wisdom, the name and fame of Dark Patrick from Donegal had, among the poor people, been carried wide.

On a mornin' at this time there rode up to Dark Patrick's door a brave, strapping young countryman on the back of a racehorse, as fine and clean a one, more by the same token, as ever Patrick had laid two eyes upon. The young man put his blessin' upon Dark Patrick, who gave him a blessin' in return.

Says the young man, says he, "Before starting off on an undertaking I have first journeyed here, to ask from you one advice regardin' it."

"Well, if it be in my power," says Dark Patrick, modestly, "to give you an advice, you'll get it."

"Thank you," says the young man, says he; "and this is what I have come to consult you re-

garding: On next week, as you know, the famous fair of Carman will take place. The King himself of all Ireland, and the Queen, and the nobility and gentry of the land will be there to see the sport, and to wager on the horse-races, and they'll have with them all their best blood-horses, every man of them desirin' to carry off the first prize of the day."

"I'm aware of that," says Dark Patrick, says he.

"Very well an' good," says the young man, says he. "I have ever been an industr'ous, hard-working boy, with a love of sport at the same time, and according as I earned money I always put by a share of it till I was able to buy, and to care, a racehorse of my own. This," says he, "is him, here; an', uncommon lucky I have been in him, for at all of our own humble sports about," says he, "he has carried away the prizes; an' there's nothing steps upon four legs has yet been able to take the lead of him in any field he entered. Still," says the young man, says he, "there's neither name nor fame to be made at our poor sports, and for that reason I have been toiling, and gathering together, till I have got a small bag of money"—and he showed it to Dark Patrick, where he had it attached to his side. "And with my horse," says he,

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"an' my bag of money, it's my intention to attend the fair of Carman and enter my horse against the Lords' horses, and see if he'll not win name for himself and fortune for me, there. It is as regards this venture," says he, "that I have come to ask your advice, and I'll thank you for it."

Dark Patrick was looking at the poor fellow as he spoke, with a half-pitying kind of look; and when the young man had finished, he took three short turns up and down. Then he stopped beside the young man, and faced him, sayin', "Ye have come for one advice—I'll give ye three."

"I'm forever obliged," says the young man. "What's the first?"

"My first advice," says Dark Patrick, says he, "is, If you'd be wise, go home and yoke your horse to a plough. If you'd be a fool, go to the fair at Carman with him."

The young man at this was a bit nonplused; and he asked Dark Patrick for why so.

"Because," says Dark Patrick, "he is a wise poor man who'll mind his stran' an' work his lan'; but he's a fool who'll go to the fair of Carman and think to get fair play when he pits himself against lords and ladies, and high-up nobility."

"I don't agree with that advice, at all," says the young man; "let us hear the second advice."

“Well an’ good,” says Dark Patrick, says he, not one bit put out, but looking like a man who had expected just such an answer. “My second advice is, If you’re a rogue and a robber, go for riches to the fair of Carman. If you’re an honest man, stay at home for heart-content.”

“I can’t see any reason whatsomever in that advice either,” says the young man, says he. “What’s your third?”

Dark Patrick wasn’t one bit taken back.

“My third an’ last advice,” says Dark Patrick, says he, “is, Don’t go to the fair of Carman at all, at all, on any account.”

The young man was mortal disgusted. But being a young man of good breedin’, he thanked Dark Patrick for his advices; and mountin’ his horse, rode straight for the fair of Carman.

And he rued it. For when he went there, and entered his horse, and backed him with his whole bag of money for the great race for which all the gentry of the land, and the King’s purser, and even the King himself, had horses entered, though his was the admiration and the favorite of all the fair, yet, as soon as they found it was owned by a poor fellow who wore a homespun coat and hailed from the back of Godspeed, all the gentry that were gathered there immediately gave himself and

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his horse a black look and cold shoulder. They said that such a horse owned by a person that no rich man knew couldn't win, and shouldn't win, and it would be an everlasting disgrace to allow him to win; and they raised an outcry against him, and the leading man in the outcry was the King's purser, notorious as the greatest rogue and most bare-faced robber in Ireland. He said that the horse of none but a dacent man should be allowed to win this, the greatest and most famous race in Ireland. But as he could find no reasonable excuse to prevent the poor man's horse starting in the race, he *collogued* with the jockeys, and graised their fists for them, and told them, no matter what horse was best, or what one was worst, a poor man's horse must on no account win the race.

And, sure enough, when the race was started, though he showed himself the best horse on the field by a long sight, he was soon jockeyed and jostled, and thrown, and the poor animal's neck broken. And the horse of the King's purser, that was neither the best nor the second best, come in first and took the prize. Then the poor young man, without horse and without money, with a heavy, heavy heart and a wiser head, come home, and took his spade in his fist and begun working

away upon his little farm, both hard-up and heart-broken.

Word of his misfortune was brought to Dark Patrick, who listened to it and said nothing. He said nothing, but he went home and he fished among all the gathering of odd and strange things that himself and his father afore him had been in the habit of collecting, in their own wise way: and among them he got a particular old spur, that was now nearly eaten through with rust—a spur that had descended in their family for generations and that was given to some of his forefathers by a poor beggarman once, whose life he had saved at the risk of his own. And the virtue of this spur was that, when a rider put it on him, the horse he rode, though it was worse than the worst in the land, could outstrip the best blood-horse, and beat him. This rare old spur he now picked out and cleaned up, and hung in a safe place by the fire-side.

And then he did nothing more, and said nothing, but went on working his little farm, day in, day out, as usual, for near twelve months after: and when it was coming close up to the fair of Carman again, he sent out word all over the countryside that he wanted the loan for one month of all the spare money that could be lent him; promisin'

that, at the end of the month, for every one bag of money he got, he'd give back two. His honesty was so well known, and his wisdom so high-rated, that any one and every one who had a stockin' of money to spare come running to him with it, till, afore eight days' time, he had to beg them to fetch no more, for he had as much as he could manage.

The next thing he did was to put out an advertisement—a very strange advertisement, you'll think—saying that he required the worst and worst-looking animal in all Donegal that went by the name of a horse. He must be spavined, he said, over in the knees, gimlet-eyed and broken-winded. His ribs would have to show out, that a man might count them a quarter of a mile off; his hurdies must cut like pen-knives, and the head on him must be as big as a barn door. For the ugliest and worst and most starved lookin' horse in the country he'd give, he said, a bag of money; and if there was a horse worse still to be got, he'd not be-  
grudge two bags for him.

Well, there was, as you may be sure, a deal of wonderment over Donegal at this strange advertisement of Dark Patrick's, and a power of speculation as to what he wanted the bone-yard ghost for. Every man had his own construction on it, and every man was further from the right thing



than the other; and Dark Patrick, as was usual with him, closed his mouth and kept his counsel. But, for the next seven days, the sight of the frightsome-looking creatures that were driven up and down the road, to and from Dark Patrick's, was simmendable—creatures some of them more like a delft-crate on four props than a human horse, and that if a man was on his oath he would be afered to sin his soul sayin' whether they were railyly horses or not.

Well, of all these specimens, Dark Patrick made pick and choice, and the one he took was a pictur, and was richly deserving of the two bags of money he gave for it; for it out-bate anything that had ever been witnessed afore—an animal that, instead of bein' named a horse with a head to it, you might better name a head with a horse to it.

As it was now drawing close upon the fair of Carman, Dark Patrick put a halter on the neck of the caricature, and, announcing to the neighbors that he was going away to try his luck, himself and his blood-horse, at the great fair of Carman, set off. The consternation among the neighbors, when they heard this, was tremendous, and all the country followed him five miles of the road, praying and begging for him to have sense and come

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back, for that he'd not only lose all his money, but the gentry assembled at Carman, when they would see him enter such a horse to run the race, would order him into a lunatic asylum immediately. Dark Patrick, he just waved his hand to them, and told them to take his blessing and go home. Then he pushed on.

When Dark Patrick reached Carman, which he did on the evening afore the great race, there riz an extraordinary hullabaloo, and word went round like wildfire about a little dark man who was come in from Donegal with a horse that, they said, needed a knot to be tied upon his tail to keep him from walking out of his halter. All the riff-raff and rascallions of the place gathered together, jeerin' and cheerin', and forming a procession round Patrick and the horse, as they marched along; and at length they got hold of the horse by the fore legs and mounted him up on their shoulders, and hung a printed board on him to say that this was a blood-horse, belonging to Dark Patrick from Donegal, come to carry off the great prize and all the spare money of the country, at the famous race of next day.

And with Dark Patrick himself walking patiently behind his ill-treated animal, the blackguards, carrying the horse, marched through all

the streets, while the lords and ladies, and all the great gentry and nobility, leaned out of their windows, and waved their handkerchiefs, and broke their hearts laughing at the sight; for anything more comical they hadn't seen for a year o' Sundays, and a heartier laugh they hadn't got for seven years before.

And on the next day, when Patrick appeared at last, haulin' his steed after him, and half-a-dozen pushin' the craiture from behind, there went up a roar fit to rattle the stars.

Dark Patrick was looking graver than ever he looked in his life afore; and the bad boys of the town now got in front and rear, and all round, some of them pulling the animal forward by the head, and others of them shoving him from behind, and all of them shouting out how much they were prepared to wager upon Dark Patrick's blood-horse from Donegal, and inviting all the gentry to take them up if they dared; and the gentry they were screeching with laughter, and holding their sides for feerd to crack their ribs. The King's purser, who had a horse in for the race, now thinkin' the joke had gone far enough, come elbowing his way through the crowd to order that this foolish poor fellow from Donegal, and his horse, should be removed off the field. But when he

learnt from Patrick that he had a bag of money to bet upon the race, by my word, the purser's tune quickly altered, and he ordered the boys to stand away clear and give the gentleman from Donegal and his horse a fair chance, for he had the same rights, he said, as any other person, high or low, and should get the same show. Then he took Dark Patrick's bets against his horse, giving him five to one upon it, and went away rubbing his hands and smiling in his inside.

Purty soon, when it was given out that the race was ready to start, up to the post prances the grand blood-horses of all the gentry, including the King's own blood-horse, and the King's purser's, and, in the very heart of them all, pushing and shoving his way among them, and the hundreds and thousands on the Grand Stand laughing till their ribs cracked, come the rickle of bones that Dark Patrick was riding. Patrick, as you may well suppose, had taken good care to put on him the old anshint spur; and, knowing its virtue, 'tis small heed he give to their laughter, their jeerin' and their cheerin'. He was as collected as if 'twas up the boreen to his own house he was riding. And when the horses reached the post and the starter said, "Off with yous now as if the divil was after yous!" off every one of two score of horses

bounced at the word; and they didn't bounce three bounces from the post when the cluster of horses was parted, and Dark Patrick's steed took the lead of the field!

It was then, I tell you, that the jeerin' was stopped on the lips of the crowd! But the very breath was taken from them when they seen Patrick's pony, at every jump, get further and further ahead of all the racers in the field, and leave them like the March wind. And them that had money on the race—which was every soul in the field, barrin' none—as they watched and watched, and seen Patrick and his pony fly further and further ahead of their famous blood-horses, were very soon laughin' on the wrong side of their mouths. And when at length, in past the winning post like a wisp of wind, Dark Patrick and his pony swept, while the other racers were only crawling on the far side of the course, it was little laughing was a-bother to the gentry on the Grand Stand, I tell you. If the rapscallions that was collected from far and near chaired Dark Patrick's horse before, they lifted horse and man, together, on their shoulders now, and, with Dark Patrick still in the saddle, chaired the pair of them round the race-course.

As bad as it was for every one else who had a

## DARK PATRICK'S BLOOD-HORSE 45

horse in the race, it was to the King's purser that all run to condole; for he always had ten times more money at stake than any other man in the field, be he king or commoner. The King's purser he put out both his hands and brushed the people away on all sides of him, sayin': "Yous had better hold your breath, and not waste it where it isn't wanted. Yous will see what yous will see afore the day's over." He marched down to Dark Patrick, just as the blackguards laid down his horse and himself. And gettin' hold of Dark Patrick's horse by the head, he dragged him forward a step or two and looked him all over with a knowing eye. Then: "I suppose you would like to get rid of that thing?" says he to Dark Patrick.

"Well," says Dark Patrick, says he, modestly, back to him, "I haven't any particular cravin' to part with him."

"I'm wonderin'," says the King's purser, says he, pretending as if he was talking to himself, "if I wouldn't purchase the thing."

"Ah!" Dark Patrick remarked, "I'm wonderin', too."

"Just as a cur'osity, you know, I want it," says the King's purser.

"Cur'osities," says Dark Patrick, "are costly things—sometimes."

"But not this cur'osity, surely," says the King's purser, says he. "It wouldn't be costly?"

"Wouldn't it?" was all Dark Patrick said.

"Now, how much," says the King's purser, "would you be after charging a man who'd rid ye of the nuisance?"

"Thanky, kindly," says Dark Patrick, "but I'm sorry the animal isn't for sale at all, at all."

"You're a quare man, surely, an' have a quare fancy," says the King's purser, "for to wish for to keep the likes o' *that* about ye."

"Every man has his own wee oddity," says Dark Patrick; "an' that's mine."

An' behold ye! the end of it was that Dark Patrick made such a fine show of not wanting to part with the animal at all, at all, that the King's purser come as far as to offer him his own race-horse, and five bags of money to boot, for it. And when he got him that far, Dark Patrick closed with him, and called it a bargain, and took the purser's fine blood-horse and his boot.

Now, it was a rule at the races of the fair of Carman that the losing man could always claim revenge upon the winning man, making him try the test over again, for satisfaction sake. And

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the minute the King's purser got possession of Patrick's old rickle, that had won the first prize, he asked for his revenge. My brave Patrick at first made all sorts of objections, but the King's purser wouldn't hear of any, and appealed to the King himself, who commanded that Patrick must surely give the gentleman his revenge, afore leavin' the field. Dark Patrick then consented to enter the contest again. And the King's purser he laid two bags of money against every one of the eleven bags Patrick now had, for this race; and when the race was getting ready he went about the field chuckling and laughing and smiling on everybody, and shaking hands ten times over with the same people. And when it was time for it to start, he said he would ride his own purchase himself, for he wanted the glory as well as the goold.

But, behold ye! when the minute come and the starters said, "Off yous go!" while Dark Patrick, putting his spur to his fine blood-horse, started like a streak of lightning, the King's purser, though he dug his heels into the flanks of the quare thing he was astride of, covered as much ground as if he was ridin' an iron gate. The animal first refused to budge, and, when it did move at last, it shuffled from one side to the other, as if it was looking for something to lean against. And when



Dark Patrick was half ways round the course, the King's purser wasn't a hen's race from the starting post, and he roaring like a bull and scouldin' like a tinker. The rapscallions they gathered and begun for to shove the animal from behind, and while the caricature was pushin' back they were pushin' forrid, throwing him bit by bit along the course, and yelling and cheering fit to bring down a section of the sky; and all the gentry were roaring and rolling all over the Grand Stand with laughter at the plight of the purser and his quare steed.

Soon, into the winning post dashes Dark Patrick. And the rapscallions pitched over the King's purser and his steed, and left them leanin' against the ground till they'd run back to chair Patrick once more; which they did, among the thunderin' applause of the hundreds of thousands of people present.

The King's purser, all the colors of the rainbow with rage, come and appealed to the King to order that Dark Patrick should be made to give back his winnings, on the ground that a low fellow like him had no right for to enter for such a race at all, at all; and that, having no right to enter, he had less to win.

But, by my faith, the King, for once in his life,

seen what was fair, and done it. He says to the purser: "My good man, if it had been the other way round, and you had won this poor fellow's money, you wouldn't have denied him his right to lose it; and now, as he has won yours, fair and square, he'll have it—and much good may it do him."

Dark Patrick, when he had listened to this, thanked the King out publicly, and let him know that he would only take half the money he had won, and the other half he would leave with the King himself. "Because," says he, "as all men knows—though you yourself have been blind to it—this man, your purser, has been robbing you with one hand, and robbing the country with the other. The half of the money I leave with you is only your own; the other half, that I take with me, I'll give in part to the poor man who was cheated here last year and his fine blood-horse lost to him, because he was poor; and the rest I'll divide among the needy of Donegal."

To the King and his gentry there and then he give a desarvin' lesson for the way they had allowed sporting and gaming to run away with wisdom and fair-play; and warned them that, to save their reputation, they would have to mend their ways. The King he was thunder-struck by all

this and acknowledged the truth of it; and so astonished was he, and so struck with the wisdom of this poor man from Donegal, that there and then, before all his nobles and gentry, he begged of Dark Patrick to become his treasurer in place of the purser, whom he now dismissed.

"I thank ye from my heart," says Patrick, says he; "but it isn't money I'm looking for, but happiness. I have three ridges of potatoes," says he, "waitin' to be dressed, so you must excuse me. . . . Good-by."

And before the King or one of the dumfounded multitude could say ay, yes, or no, off, on his fine new blood-horse, and with his bags of money safe at his saddle, Patrick was gone. And when he come to Donegal he made his loss good to the poor fellow that had suffered, and he gave three stockings of money to every one who had loaned him one; and he divided the remainder among the poor.

The very next morning after he'd done this, any one who passed that way might have seen Dark Patrick in his wee garden, in his shirt sleeves, the modestest and the humblest man in Donegal, and the happiest, too, dropping the sweat off him while he dressed his potatoes.

## IV

### THE BODACH AND THE BOY

**T**HERE was a man once named Crohoore, and he had one son that was the apple of his eye to him. A brave boy the son was when he grew up, and nothing would do him but he would go away to push his fortune. When he was going off Crohoore warned him on the peril of his life not to hire with the Bodach of Glenmornan, for though he offered big wages to entice men into his power, he always managed to make the man hired with him rue the day. The lad when he was going off promised to mind this, but on his way through Glenmornan who should he meet but the Bodach himself, and the Bodach asked where he was going and what he was looking for.

“I am going,” says the young fellow, says he, “to push my fortune. I am looking for a good master.”

“That is lucky,” says the Bodach, says he, “for

I am looking for a good man. Will you hire with me?"

"No," says the young fellow, "I will not hire with you, because my father warned me against you, and said it would be worse for me if I did, for that you were very bad entirely to your boys."

"Ha, ha, ha!" says the Bodach, says he, laughing at him, "them's fables and ghost stories, and I wonder at a fine, brave, smart fellow like you believing in them. Ye'll travel far," says he, "before you meet a better master or an offer of better wages than I will give you."

The young fellow was tempted very much, and he asked him what wages he would give him.

The Bodach said, "I will engage you for a year and a day, and give you a gold guinea every day of them, provided," says he, "that you do everything you are bid, and that you will never say you rued the day you hired with me; and," says the Bodach, "(for I like to be just), I will engage for my part that if I ever say I rue the day I hired you, your wages will be doubled, and moreover should either of us be guilty of ruing the day, the other will have leave to draw him at a cart-tail, and flog him through the nine towns."

Well, these looked grand wages entirely to Crohoore's poor son, and thinking of the rich man he

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would go back home he couldn't help but agree to them, and away home with the Bodach he went.

The very next morning when the young fellow got his breakfast, the Bodach took him out and sent him with a plough and a pair of horses into a park that was three miles every way. And says the Bodach, says he:

“Your dinner will be ready for you when you are done ploughing that field, but don't on the peril of your life come in till the last sod is turned.”

The poor fellow when he looked at the size of the field, three miles every way, and thought that he wasn't to get dinner till he had every sod of it turned, his heart went down to his boots, and little wonder. But he fell to anyhow, and he begun to plough, and every furrow took him two hours from start to finish, and he hadn't half-a-dozen furrows ploughed in the field when he dropped down from weakness and the fair dint of hunger.

The Bodach he come out to see how he was getting along, and he come up to him where he was lying and he gives him the toe of his boot, and “Get up out of that,” says he, “you lazy *onseach* and get on with your work, for if this is all you have done yet I am afeard the year and a day will be up afore your dinner-time comes round.”

“Oh, oh, weary’s me,” says the young fellow, “to ever hire with you anyhow. If I had only observed my poor father’s advice——”

“What, what,” says the Bodach, says he, “sure it’s not rucing your bargain you are.”

“Indeed and it is,” says the young fellow, says he, “rueing it sorely.”

“All right,” says the Bodach, says he. “Get up out of this and come along with me in double quick time,” and he got him by the scruff of the neck and he hauled him with him. And he tied him to the tail of the cart, and flogged him through the nine towns, till the poor young fellow was a spectacle of cuts and bruises, and the last breath was only in his body. And then the dirty Bodach loosed him from the cart and left him lying there in the ditch-sheuch, and only that some poor Christian come to his help and took him home and doctored him he would never have eaten the bread of corn again.

As soon as he was able he starts for home, dragging his legs after him, and when he reached home it’s the grieved man and the angry one was his father, and he swore that he would never sleep two nights in one bed or eat two meals at the one table till he would reach that Bodach and have his revenge. So, leaving his wee house and wee

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place in charge of his son, Crohoore spat on his stick and started off afore him, and he never stopped nor stayed till he came to the Bodach's place of Glenmornan. And passing through Glenmornan, who should he meet but the Bodach himself, and the Bodach stopped him, and asked where he was going and what he was looking for.

"I am going," says Crohoore, says he, "to push my fortune, and am looking for a likely master."

"Well, surely," says the Bodach, says he, "that's lucky, for I'm looking for a likely man. Will you hire with me?"

"What's your terms," says Crohoore, says he.

"My terms," says the Bodach, "is easy enough, and my wages is high. If you hire with me for a year and a day, and do everything that you are told to do, I will give you a gold guinea for every day of them. But," says he, "if you don't do what you are bid, or if you ever rue your bargain, instead of getting wages you will have to allow me to flog you at the cart-tail through the nine towns, and to show you that I am just," says he, "if ever I rue my bargain you will get double wages, and besides I will allow you to flog me at the cart-tail through the nine towns. What do you think of that?"

"I think," says Crohoore, says he, "that you are



both just and generous, and a more liberal-minded man or fairer master I could not expect to meet if I travelled from this day till the day I'd be scratching a grey head."

Well and good, the bargain was concluded, and the master took Crohoore home with him. And in the morning, after Crohoore had his breakfast the master took him out to a park that was three miles every way and there was a plough and two horses in it. And says he:

"Your work to-day is to hold the plough in that park, and you will come in to your dinner," says he, "when the park is all ploughed and not afore."

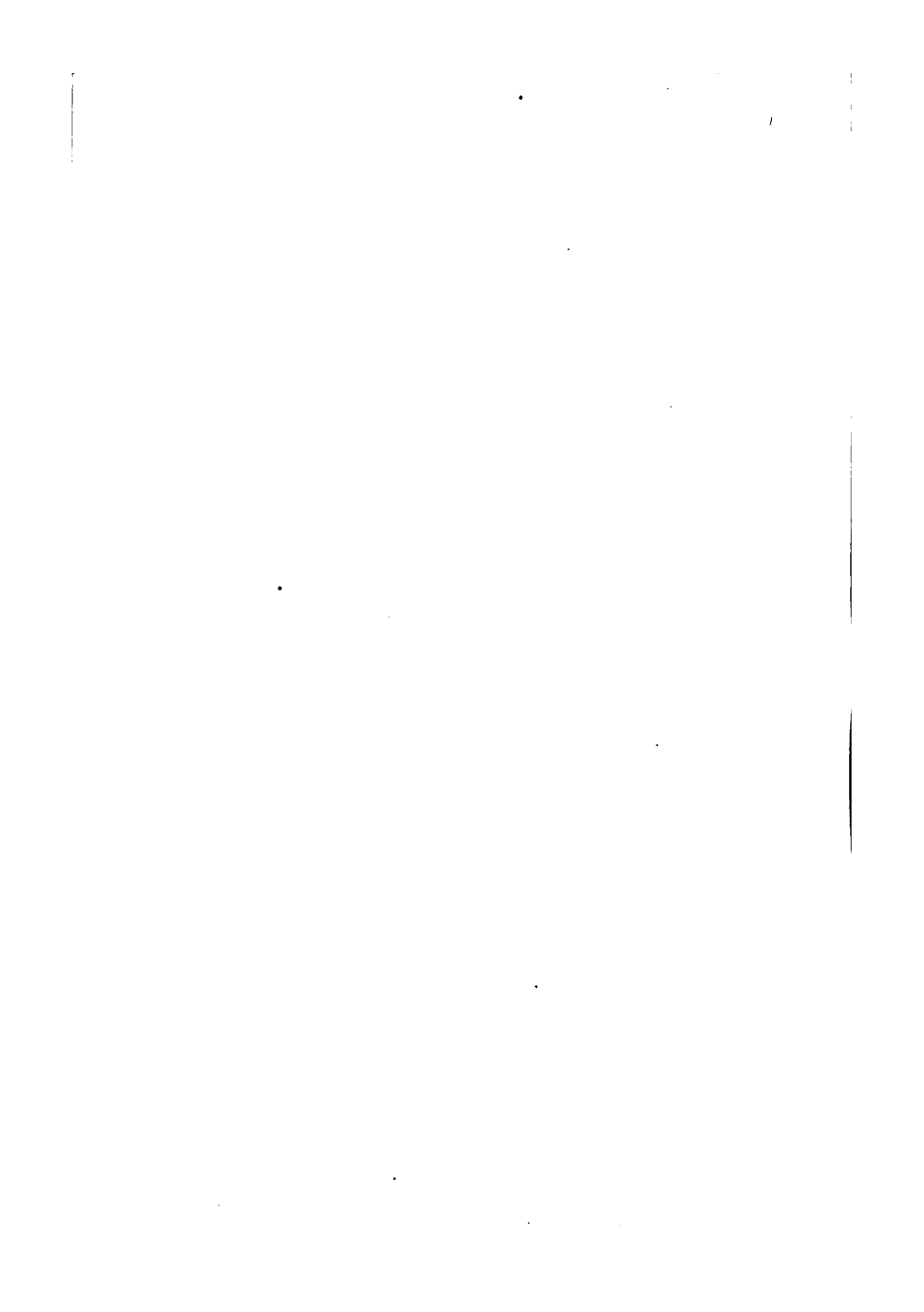
Crohoore stepped into the park and he whistling like a sky-lark, and the master went away about his business. And when the Bodach came back late in the evening to find how Crohoore was getting along, he saw the plough and one horse standing in the self-same spot they had been in the morning, and Crohoore standing between the plough handles with a good grip of them in his hands.

"And what, you vagabone you!" says he to Crohoore, "do you mean to tell me that you haven't started the plough since morning?"

"Started the plough," says Crohoore, says he, "I will swear to you that I haven't. You are



“Oh, you stupid scoundrel, . . . ‘I would like to be knocking the thick head off ye.’”—Page 57.



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sorely mistaken in me if you think that's the sort of boy I am; you sent me into this field to hold the plough, and," says he, "I haven't let go of it since. If the horses would have started once they would have started a dozen times, only I planted my foot in the ground and held hard every time."

"Oh, you stupid scoundrel," says the Bodach, says he, "I would like to be knocking the thick head off ye."

"What!" says Crohoore, says he. "Surely you're not vexed having employed me?"

"Oh, no, no," says the master, says he, remembering himself all at once. "It's glad and very glad I am, for you are a fine man entirely; but," says he, "where's the second horse was in the plough?"

"Oh," says Crohoore, says he, "that's all right. The keeper of the Inns in the town, he happened to pass here in the morning, and as I doubted from all signs that I'd be holding the plough here a long time afore this field would get ploughed and me get called in to my dinner, I thought it better to make a wee arrangement with the landlord of the Inns, so I gave him the other horse on condition that he would send me out to the field three good meals a day for three weeks."

“What!” says the Bodach, says he, “is it go and swop the best steed in my stables that I paid three hundred guineas for—is it go and swop him to the landlord of Head Inns to get you three beggarly meals a day for three weeks—is it that ye did?” and he began to tear up and down in a towering rage.

“I hope,” says Crohoore, says he again, “that it isn’t vexed ye are or that you rue your bargain with me.”

“No, no, no,” says the Bodach, says he, taking himself up in an instant, “that’s a way I have,” says he, “when I be jumping with joy. Ye’re a fine man,” says he, “and I never was pleased better with any man ever I had; you are worth your weight in gold, and I wouldn’t part ye for no money, but come ye in home,” says he, “and get your supper and go to bed, and I will see what I can do for you in the morning.”

“I am glad of that,” says Crohoore, says he. “I just love you, and I never had a better master nor never will.”

Next day, after Crohoore had his breakfast, the Bodach takes him out and shows him a great big mountain with five hundred head of cattle on it that were tearing and running east and west to get off it, and says he to Crohoore, “Your duty the

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day is to herd that mountain and as long as there will be one head of the five hundred missing on it you are not to come into your dinner nor your dinner to come out to you."

"Very well and good," says Crohoore, says he, and he went off to the mountain whistling like a sky-lark; and the cattle was that wild that they were running away disappearing off the mountain at all quarters, and the Bodach went about his business.

Drawing on night the Bodach come to the mountain to Crohoore, and he couldn't see the sign of a beast on it, let alone five hundred. And says he to Crohoore in a rage, "Where," says he, "is my five hundred beasts?"

"I suppose," says Crohoore, says he, "they are wherever pleases them best. How do you expect me to know where your five hundred beasts are?"

"Sir," says the Bodach, says he, "what did I send you out here the day to do?"

"Ye sent me out," says Crohoore, says he, "to herd this mountain; and I think," says he, "ye'll give in that I have done my duty very well indeed, for there's the mountain safe and sound and on the same spot still. I don't want to boast much of myself," says Crohoore, says he, "but still I will say that if you had hired a slacker man than me

you'd have lost your mountain this day, for five times (no less) it started off with its galloping and buck-leaping, and never stopped till it was within two mile of Loch Finn, but I headed it round there, and after giving me big dodging I got it back to its own place again.—And knowing," says Crohoore, says he, "that if I left it, to go home for my bite of dinner the devil himself wouldn't overtake it when I would get back, I got your black bull," says he, "in the hollow below and killed him and roasted a side of him, and I can stay out here herding your mountain for three weeks to come and not want for good sweet meat while that black bull of yours lasts."

"Och, och, och," says the Bodach, says he, "you are a terrible scoundrel to let my five hundred cattle go east and west and get lost over the face of the world, and to kill my black bull," says he, "that I paid three hundred guineas for not three weeks ago." And he went tearing up and down like a raving madman.

"What! What!" says Crohoore, says he, "You're surely not vexed with me and don't rue your bargain?"

And with that the Bodach minded himself and says he, "Oh, no, no, that's a way I have when I

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be jumping with joy. Such a boy as you," says he, "I never had afore, and such a boy I am sure I will never have again. Come home with me," says he, "and get your supper and go to bed and I will give you something to do in the morning."

"I am glad of that," said Crohoore, says he. "I just love you, and I never had a better master nor never will."

So in the morning when Crohoore got his breakfast he went to the Bodach and asked what was for him to do that day.

Says the Bodach, says he, "On yesterday you let my five hundred head of cattle stray east and west over the face of the world, and what you have got to do the day is to go searching till you find them."

"And where," says Crohoore, says he, "am I to look for them?"

"You are to look for them," says the Bodach, says he, "in every likely place and in every unlikely place."

And Crohoore started out, and the Bodach went about his business. And when the Bodach come home in the evening he found his haystacks, and his corn-stacks, and his turf-stacks, every one of them pulled down and scattered to the winds of the world, and he found his flower garden all



rooted up, and he found Crohoore on top of his house tearing the thatch and the screws off it, and he was just stripping the last off of it when the Bodach come tearing and roaring up to him and, "Oh, you rascal of the world," says the Bodach, says he, in a tearing rage, "what are you doing at all, at all?"

"Looking for your cattle," says Crohoore, says he, "you told me to look for them in every likely place and in every unlikely place, and as the unlikely places are the fewest I thought I'd begin them first. I have looked," says he, "under all your flower beds and in the heart of your turf-stacks, and corn-stacks, and haystacks, and now I have finished looking in the roof of your house; and would it surprise you," says he, "not one of the five hundred have I ever got yet."

When the Bodach began to rage and roar and stamp up and down this time again, Crohoore said he wasn't surely vexed and didn't rue his bargain; and the Bodach said no, that was a way he had when he was jumping with joy.

Next morning the Bodach said to him: "My five hundred cattle are lost and scattered far wider than ever the day, and what you have got to do is to look for them in every likely place and fetch every head of them into my yard."

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And when the Bodach come back at night he met Crohoore and he asked him did he succeed.

"Well, not altogether," says Crohoore, says he, "I think it will take me another day, but I found three hundred of them," says he, "and the three hundred head I have piled in your yard below. You had better come and count them."

And when the Bodach seen the three hundred heads cut off his three hundred best beasts he said, "Oh, you scoundrel, you have me ruined out and out. My heart is broken, and the next thing will be that you will have my death on you."

"Surely," says Crohoore, says he, "you're not vexed with me and don't rue your bargain?"

"Oh, no, no, no!" says the Bodach remembering himself.

On the next day the Bodach went out himself, for he wouldn't trust Crohoore, and he gathered the other two hundred head of cattle and he brought them into his yard. And he told Crohoore that night that the cattle had been ploughing through all sorts of dirty places, and they were mud and dirt from the hocks down, and he was afeared they would take foot disease. "So, Crohoore," says he, "you must wash and dry the feet of the two hundred to-morrow; ye can drive them

down in ones," says he, "to the river and wash them."

Crohoore he agreed, and the next evening the Bodach come to him to know if he had his work done.

"I have," says Crohoore, "I have it done well and very well, and they are all drying in rows upon the bank."

"What do you mean," says the master, says he.

Says Crohoore, says he, "I started washing them the way you told me. When I drove the beast down into the water the devil himself couldn't keep him standing at ease till I'd wash his feet. So by the dint of my genius," says he, "I hit upon a bright plan that I know would please you well. I cut off the four feet of every beast," says he, "at the knee, and I carried them down and washed them with the greatest ease, and then laid them out drying on the banks, and I was small time getting through my work, I can tell you."

"I am ruined," says the Bodach, says he, "ruined out and out, and forever and a day after," and he began to tear the hair off himself with the rage.

"Surely," says Crohoore, says he, "it's not rueing your bargain you are."

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"Oh, no, no, no," says the Bodach, "it's jumping for joy I am at having such a good and faithful boy as you are, and I don't know what I'd do without you, at all, at all."

"I am glad of that," says Crohoore, says he, "for I love you and you're the best master ever I had or ever will have; and don't fret, for it's my intention never to leave you."

"Och, och, och," says the Bodach, says he.

And the next morning the Bodach took Crohoore out with him to his pig-yard, where there were twenty stys and twenty pigs in every sty; the pig-stys were dirty and very dirty, and the pigs themselves were not one bit cleaner. Says the Bodach, says he, "I want you to wash and to clean them pigs and them pig-stys, both within and without."

"All right," says Crohoore, says he, "I will do it." And in the evening when the Bodach come to see how Crohoore was getting along the pig-stys was washed and cleaned, and every pig belonging to all twenty of them was hung up in a row all round the yard, just the same as they would be in a butcher's shop. The Bodach he went roaring and ramping around, and he says, "Oh, you notorious villain you, what's this you have done?"

“What is it I have done,” says Crohoore, “but what you told me, clean both big-stys and pigs within and without.”

“I’m a ruined man,” says the Bodach, “and my death and ruination I lay at your door, for you are the greatest rascal unhung.”

“What is that you say,” says Crohoore, says he, “surely it is not vexed you are or ruing your bargain.”

“Oh, no, no, no,” says the Bodach, says he all at once. “I am far from vexed. That is only a way I have when I am jumping with joy; and as for you, you are the best boy ever I had and ever will have, and I don’t know what I will do at all, at all, if I should ever have the misfortune to lose you.”

“Don’t fret about that,” says Crohoore, says he, “I never had such a master as you are, and never will have such another, and cart horses will not be able to draw me out of your sarvices, even when my time’s up.”

And “Och, och, och!” says the Bodach, says he.

The Bodach he didn’t go to bed that night at all. He wandered about and up and down the whole night, planning what he could do at all, at all, to get rid of Crohoore, and at long and at last he struck upon a grand plan, as he thought.

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There was a big, wild beggar-man that they called Billy the Beggar who used to come about the Bodach's house every day begging, and he carried a terrible knife with him, and everybody was afraid to refuse him for fear of the knife.

And the Bodach said to himself that he would order Crohoore next day to kill the beggar, for that he had him and the whole country-side annoyed. "Then," says the Bodach, says he, "Crohoore's life will be at my mercy in no less than three different ways. If he doesn't do my bidding, then I can do what I like with him; if he does my bidding and the beggar kills him, then my hands will be saved of his blood, but if he gets the better of the beggar and kills the beggar, then I will have him tried and hung for murder." And for once in his life anyhow the Bodach was jumping for joy.

The next morning when Crohoore had his breakfast he come to the Bodach and asked what was for him to do the day.

"Why," says the Bodach, says he, "I don't think of anything much that is to be done the day. I think," says he, "as you have worked so hard and done so well for me from the day I hired ye, ye're desarvin' of getting the day off to amuse yourself as best you like. There is only one lit-

tle thing," says he, "that I want you to do afore you go off looking for fun."

Crohoore thanked him heartily, and said he would be glad to do any little thing his master wanted before he would go off.

"It is only," says he, "Billy the Beggar who comes here every day, and who has me annoyed, and I want you to kill him and be done with him."

"Very well and good," says Crohoore, says he, "I will do that afore I begin my day's fun." And then the Bodach went away about his business, and when he come back in the evening and met Crohoore he asked him how he had enjoyed himself, and did he kill Billy the Beggar.

"I never had as good a day's fun in my life," says Crohoore, says he, "and I began by killing Billy the Beggar."

"Indeed," says the master, "and how did you do it?"

"Very easy," says Crohoore, says he. "When he came to the door begging, I took him in, and I filled his bag with all the goold and silver you had in your chest, and I put it on his back, and I sent him away Billy the Gentleman. Billy the Beggar is as dead as a door-post, and will never trouble you more."

And when the Bodach heard this he set up a

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whillaloo, and: "Oh, you are an eternal scoundrel," says he, "all the harm ever you done me afore was nothing at all, at all, to this. You have robbed me and ruined me out and out," says he, "and it's meself's the beggar for the rest of my days."

"What, what," says Crohoore, says he, "sure you are not vexed with me and don't rue your bargain."

"Vexed!" says the Bodach, says he, "it's mad I am, and I rue the day ever my eyes first seen ye, ye thieving villain ye, and I wish I was rid of ye never to see ye more."

"Well, well and good," says Crohoore, says he, "come out here till I tie ye to the cart-tail." And out he had to go, and Crohoore tied him to the cart-tail and whipped and flogged him through the nine towns; and I tell ye every time Crohoore put the whip down on him he brought it down with a vengeance, and he made the Bodach jump and screech as he whaled, and whacked, and flayed, and flogged him through town after town, and give him two cuts for every cut the Bodach had given his son. And afore he stopped he made the Bodach promise that he would never act the same way again towards any poor strange boy who



would come looking to him for service, but that he would treat him as if he was his own son.

He got his double wages, two guineas for every day in the year, and he went home a rich man and a happy one. And proud and happy his poor son was to see him when he come back: and as happy as that day was there was no day after that was one bit less so. And I hope it may be likewise, ever, with you and with me.

V

THE FAR ADVENTURES OF BILLY BURNS

'**T**WAS a queer adventure, sure enough, the one that happened long ago to Billy Burns beyond in Mullinacrick. And it's as often as I've fingers and toes on me I've heard Billy himself rehearse it. He's a pretty old man now, is Billy; but in them days he was a brave, strapping, *bouchaill* on the edge of his welt. He had a little cabin of his own, perched on the side of the hill just about a hen's race above the sea, and furnished all complete, barrin' the wife; but at the gait he was gallivantin' the world gave in he'd soon have her there likewise. Billy was a lively kind of a lad when he was a youngster: he had a loose foot and a fellow for it; and wake, weddin', fair, or spree, from the upper end of the parish to the lower end of it, seldom missed Billy; and as you may well suppose, night usually fell on him, and he far from home.

Now, there was one lovely, bright night, in the

month o' November, that Billy was getting back from the fair of Ardara, with more of the night behind him than before him; and reachin' as far as the little rock, of a hundred ton or so, that they call "Fionn MacCool's Finger-stone," lying in the middle of the bogs, about a turf man's call from Billy's own cottage, sat down on it, to draw his breath before he'd go further, and to take a good think to himself. But sorra long was he seated till, lo, and behold ye! the Big Stone—for it was always known as an enchanted stone, anyhow—began to move inunder him, and to travel across the bogs with Billy on it. Billy lifts his head, and looks round him, and, "Be this, and be that!" says he, when he got the tongue, "but this bangs Banagher, and Banagher bangs the divil!" The words weren't well out of his mouth when up comes a wonderful big eagle, sailing through the skies, and lights on the stone, right to one side o' Billy. And—

"A fine night this, Billy Burns," sez the eagle, sez he.

"It is, sir," sez Billy, sez he, taking the lad in with the tail of his eye, and speaking him fair.

"What do you say to a little bit of a jaunt, Billy?" sez the eagle.

"How do ye mean!" sez Billy, sez he, casting

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an eye round about him to see where the convain-  
ience was.

"If ye get on my back, I'll give ye a bit of di-  
varsion," sez the eagle, "and show ye some jog-  
graphy."

"It's a mortial kind of ye," says Billy. And,  
thinkin' it as well to humor the lad, he mounts  
upon the eagle's back; and the eagle spreads his  
wings and off with him.

"Where are we going?" sez Billy, when they  
got up a bit, and he saw his mother's house, no  
bigger nor a matchbox, away below.

"Name your pleasure," sez the eagle, sez he.

"If it's the same to you, sir," sez Billy, "as I've  
always had a great curiosity entirely for to see the  
moon, I'd be pleased if ye'd head for that organ."

"Well and good," sez the eagle, "the moon  
it'll be."

And up, and up, the lad worked his way, till  
at last they arrived there. And, more be the same  
token, the moon was pretty new that same night.

"Get off o' me, Billy Burns," sez the eagle,  
sez he, "and take a sait on the horn o' the moon  
for a couple o' minutes while I aise my back."

Billy got a hold o' the moon, and pulled him-  
self onto it.

"Now," sez the eagle, sez he, when he got Billy

safe off him, "ye can cool your heels and study your joggraphy.—I'm off. Good-by!" And away the lad starts down for the world again, and he breaking his heart laughing at his own wit, and the plight he was leaving poor Billy in.

"Well, upon my socks, Billy Burns," sez Billy, sez he to himself, as he looked down after the lad: "upon my socks, Billy Burns," sez he, "ye're in a queer fix now, me lad,—aren't ye, or not?"

But with that there opens a door in the side of the moon, and out comes a little lad with a teapot in his hand, and seeing Billy perched there, he says, "What the divil are you doing here?"

"Faith, it's more nor meself can tell ye," sez Billy.

"Then off with ye out o' that," sez the little lad, "and don't overbalance the moon, and tumble it into the sea."

"Arrah, let me alone," sez Billy: "what harm am I doing?"

"Don't ye see ye're darkening the world," says the lad, "with them spawgs of feet of yours? Get off out o' that, I tell ye."

And, sure enough, when Billy looked down he seen the lad was speaking true. The shadow of his feet overspread the whole world and ten thousand miles beyond. But there was no help for it.

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"Where am I going to get off till," sez Billy.

"It's no matter to me," sez the buck, "only off to the divil with ye, out o' my road."

"Faith, and," sez Billy, beginnin' to warm, "in that case I'm afeerd I'd only be gettin' into your road for all eternity."

"The curse o' Cromm'il on ye!" sez the lad, "I'll make short dispensation o' ye!" and hitting Billy a simmendable crack on the skull with the teapot he had in his hand, he knocked the poor fellow clean off, and sent him like a kilt crow trapaizin' down the skies. When Billy reached halfway to the world what should happen along but a flock of wild geese flying for Australia; and into the middle of them me brave Billy butts, making a scatteration on them.

"Well, bad manners to the mother that forgot to put breeding on ye, Billy Burns," sez a big white gander of them, "or where are you comin' from anyhow?"

"I'm sure, I am sorry for my bad manners, in coming in without knocking," says Billy. "I'm coming from the moon."

"From the moon!" sez the gander. "And what in the name of patience were ye transactin' up there?"

"Och," sez Billy, sez he, "it's a long story, and

—ye see the hurry I'm in!—I haven't time for to tell ye."

"Musha, and ye are in a hurry," sez the gander. "I noticed that as ye come down. Still, your story's so very wonderful that I'd like to hear the outs and ins of it; so if ye take hold of my leg, I'll give ye a lift along the skies, while ye tell us the story."

Billy wasn't one bit sorry at the chance. He got hold of one of the gander's legs, and went sailing along with him, rehearsing to him the whole story just as it happened. And when Billy was finished, "Thanky, Billy," sez the gander. "And ye can now let go."

But when Billy looked under him, he seen that they had left Ireland entirely about a hundred mile behind, and 'twas far out over the ocean, they were. So, instead of letting go, as the lad requested, 'twas harder he gripped.

"I'm sure," sez Billy, sez he, "I'm obliged to ye for your hospitality to travelers. But still it isn't my intention to part with ye yet awhile."

"What do you mean?" sez the gander.

"Don't you see I can't let go now," sez Billy, sez he, "or I'd fall into the sea and be drowned dead."

"I don't give a tinker's dam what happens to

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ye, Billy," sez the gander. "Ye don't expect I'm going to leg ye to Australiay. Besides," sez he, "ye'd be dead with hunger before ye got there.— Let go," sez he. "Ye have a long drop down, and if, every now and then as ye drop, ye give a spring towards the land, ye'll maybe reach it afore ye get to the bottom."

"The divil a bit o' me'll let go," sez Billy.

"Be me soul, and ye will," sez the gander, "or else I'll know the reason why!" And with that he screws down the head of him, and with a bite he takes half a pound of meat out of poor Billy's hand.

And poor Billy, with a "Melia murder!" out of him, let go, and the geese went off laughing heartily at the plight they left the poor divil in.

As Billy fell, he, rememberin' the gander's advice, kept jumping towards the land. But in spite of it all, he dropped in the middle of the ocean, and sunk like a stone.

He come one slambang against, as he thought, the bottom of the sea; but it wasn't the bottom of the sea at all, at all—only a whale that he struck, and it was on the back of it, strag-legs, that Billy landed. It let a bellow out of it like a bull a-sticking, and "Bad luck to ye, Billy Burns," sez the whale, sez he, "and bad luck to the school-



master that spoilt ye. Isn't that a nice way," sez he, "to force your addresses where they were neither asked nor wanted?"

With the bump that Billy got on the whale's back, the heart of him was jerked clear into the crown of his head. As soon as it come back again, and that he found his speeches, sez he, "I'm sure, I ask your pardon, but it wasn't intentional on my part to be rude."

"The Burnses," sez the whale, "never were noted for rudeness, I give in—if I bar your grand-uncle, Jacky Burns, that was transported to Buttony Bay for sheep-stealing."

"I beg your pardon, sir," says Billy, "no offense meant; but if it's all the same to you we'll not mind going into ancient histories just now."

"Then," sez the whale, sez he, "would it be impertinence to ask you where you were coming from in such a hurry just now?"

"No impertinence in the wide world," sez Billy, sez he. "I was just coming from the moon."

"Lommonty Jacob! from the moon?" sez the whale. "Well, upon my socks, that was a ramble for a rambling Irishman. And what errand, may I inquire, took you up there?" sez he.

"It was because of an argument we had in Micky Harraghy's, the shoemaker's, of a night

last week," sez Billy, "regarding what was the moon made of, anyhow, and why did it grow one fortnight, and wither away the next."—For Billy thought it as wise not to waste too much truth on every *stravageur* of the world that he come across.

"Ha! ha! ha!" sez the whale, sez he, opening the jaws of him, and letting out a right hearty laugh. "And did you find out?" sez he.

"Yes," sez Billy, sez he, "I did."

"Well," sez the whale, sez he, "would you mind making me sensible?"

Sez Billy, sez he: "I discovered that the moon is a tremendous big musharoom that takes fourteen days to come to its size. Then there's a lad lives inside of it, comes out and eats it down during the next fortnight."

"Well, upon my honor," sez the whale, sez he, "isn't it mortal simple after all, when one comes to think of it?"

"Mortal simple entirely," sez Billy, sez he. "And you'd wonder why you never thought of it before."

"But," sez the whale, sez he, "it's a puzzle to me what happens to the man when he has the musharoom eat out, or where is he till it grows again."

Billy he was non-plushed at this, and sez he,

“Upon my veracity,” sez he, “I never thought of that, or I’d a put the question to him.—But,” sez he then, “I’m thinking maybe he goes under a bush till it grows again.”

“Troth, and you’re right,” sez the whale; “that’s what he does.—Have you a good hold on me back, Billy?” sez the whale then.

“I have,” sez Billy.

“And an easy seat?” sez the whale.

“And an easy seat, thank ye,” sez Billy.

“Because,” sez the whale, sez he, turning a portion of his eye’s white upon Billy, “you could have a ride inside if you prefer.”

“I’m obliged, no,” sez Billy, sez he.

“It’s mighty warm and comfortable inside, mind you,” sez the whale.

“I haven’t a doubt of it,” sez Billy, sez he; “but I always prefer the box-seat.”

“Oh, very well, just please yourself,” sez the whale.

“Might I make boul’ to ask,” sez Billy, sez he, “where it is you’re going?”—for all this time they were going through the water at the rate of nineteen weddings.

“It’s to Jamaicky I’m going,” sez the whale, sez he, “on the other side of the world, entirely.”

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"The Lord save me," sez Billy, sez he; "isn't that where the blacks live?"

"Never mind," sez the whale, sez he; "I'll be able to show you some grand sceneries between here and there. What," sez he, "is the grandest and sublimest sight you'd like to see?"

"Well, to tell the truth," sez Billy, sez he, "the sublimest sight I'd like to plant my two eyes upon this minute is my own wee cabin at home in Mullinacrick."

"Blatheration!" sez the whale.

"No blatheration at all about it," sez Billy.

"The cabin's a small one, I admit, and that it's not over-white I can't deny; and I know, too, that a man might easy put his arm down the chimney and unbolt the back door; but, nevertheless," sez he, "and notwithstanding, that little cabin would look mighty sublime to me, entirely, this minute, if I could only plant eyes on it."

"Do you really mean it?" sez the whale.

"I do really mean it," sez Billy: "and I'll never forget it to you, if you only put your tail the other way and take your bearings for Mullinacrick."

"Well," sez the whale, sez he, "I'm under a particular debt to your family, Billy, though maybe you don't know it; and I'd like to oblige ye."

“Thank ye,” sez Billy. “And, indeed, and to tell ye the truth, I didn’t know that my family ever did you a kindness.”

“They did then,” sez the whale. “It’s four and twenty years come next Patrickmas that your mother’s brother, Andy, fell overboard out of Condy Molowney’s smack. I had been fasting eight and forty hours before that: and a sweeter or tenderer morsel than your Uncle Andy I didn’t taste for seven years before, nor for seven years after. And it is why I could never forget it to him, nor to one of the family since.”

“Arrah, don’t mention it!” sez Billy, sez he. “I’d make ye heartily welcome to all the uncles I have in the world—and all the aunts into the bargain.—That’s right,” sez he, “and I’ll never forget your kindness”—for the whale had shifted right round and was carrying Billy through the water at a mile a minute, in the direction of Mullinacrick.

The whale was going at such speed that when he come nigh the shore, he hadn’t time to slow up, but struck with his nose, like a battering-ram, against the white rocks, just where yous all know that they rise, a mile below Mullinacrick. And with the shock, Billy was shot right off the whale’s back, and landed high and dry, on his mouth, and

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nose, on the top of the banks. The shock was a pretty sore one, and he lay there for a full minute, gasping; and when he got up to his feet, lo and behold ye, it wasn't the top of the cliffs at all he was on, but in the middle of the bog, and just beside the enchanted rock that he had sat down on that same evening, before the eagle come to him.

And after Billy had scratched his head a full minute, "Be this and be that!" sez he, "and be the piper, that played before Moses! but I'll give me head for a football to the first man finds me sleeping beside an enchanted rock in the bogs again—for that was the fiercest and onraisonablest dhraim ever I had in my life!"

## VI

### THE TINKER OF TAMLACHT

**T**HE Tinker of Tamlacht was a lad, long, long ago, who used to make and fix stills. And there was one day he was going across a soft bog to a place where he had to fix a still, and he sinking over his head in it every other step he took. The temper got the better of the poor man at last and says he: "May the Devil take me if I come this way again."

Howsomever, he got out of the bog at last, and he fixed his still, and got three shillings for the job.

On his way back he met a poor man, who told him he was in great distress and asked him for help. The Tinker put his hand in his pocket and reached him one of the three shillings. He hadn't gone half a mile farther when another poor man appears before him, and had another great story of distress entirely for him, and asked the Tinker for help. Now the Tinker, for he was a good-natured soul, put his hand in his pocket and

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reached him another of the shillings; and then he trudged on again; and what would you have of it but afore he covered a third half mile o' the ground a third poor man appears before him, with a tale of distress, too, and a pitiful face, and begged for help.

"Well," says the Tinker, says he, "I have just one shillin' in my pocket, and I have a wife and children in want at home, and I'll divide the shillin' with you."

But says the poor man, says he: "Don't break on it, for God's sake, for anything less than a shillin' would be of little use to me."

Without more ado, into his pocket the Tinker thrusts his hand, and reaches out his third and last shilling and the last ha'penny he had in the world to the poor man. The minute he did this the rags fell away from the miserable object, and 'twas a white shinin' angel was facin' the Tinker! Says the vision: "I am an angel from heaven who came to try you, and appeared before you as three different poor men; and now, in reward for the kindly heart you have toward the poor, I will grant you any three requests you like to ask."

The Tinker, he thanked the angel right heartily; and then he thought what three requests he should ask of him.



Wherever he went it was always a trouble to him that people were stealing things out of his budget, so he thought it would be a grand thing, entirely, if he could remedy it once and for all. And, as a first request, he asked that anything he would put into his budget might never come out again till he would take it out himself.

The Angel said that was granted, and asked him what was his second request. And, after he had thought over in his mind for a while, says the Tinker, says he: "I have one apple-bush growin' in my garden which I never can get any good of, for the blackguards of Tamlacht always steal every apple off it, and I would ask it as a request that any one who leaves a hand on them apples may stick to the apple and to the bush till I release them myself."

"That's granted, too," says the Angel. "What is your third request?"

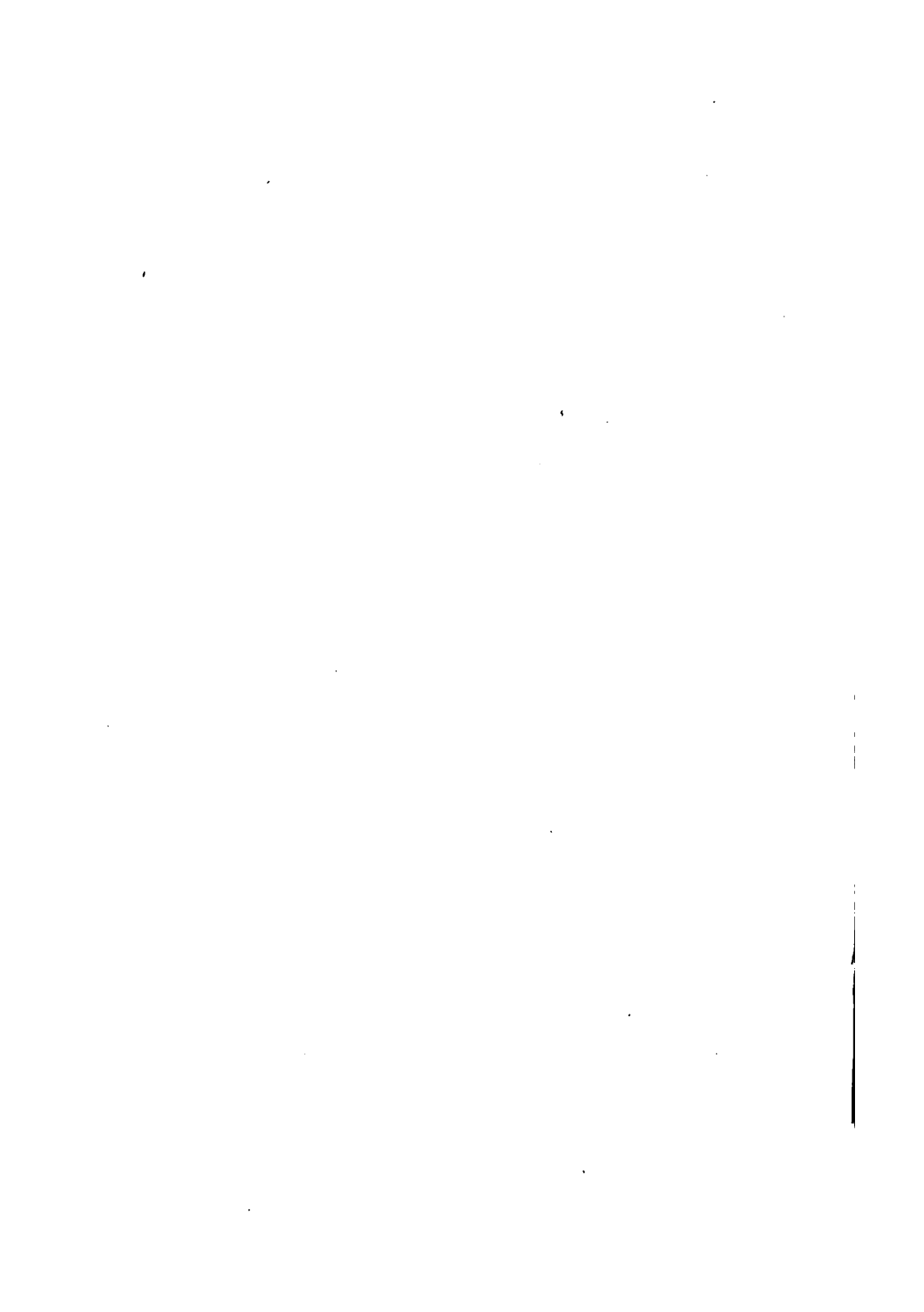
"Well, as we're both poor and bothered at home," says the Tinker, "and our meal-chest's low, I ask, as a request, that it may be filled and will be never empty more."

"That's granted, too," says the Angel, "and it's sorry I am for you that you didn't ask, as your first and greatest request, to have God's blessing."

Says the Tinker, says he: "True enough, God's



**“I’ll be all ashamed, passing through this town where everybody knows me, and them seein’ you with me.”—Page 87.**



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blessin' would be a fine request to ask; but, if I had it itself, would it thicken our stirabout for us? Would it break the bones of Tamlacht blackguards for me when they'd go stealin' off my wee apple-tree and puttin' their hands in my budget?"

The Angel, he shook his head and went away.

Now, in ten days' time, he was going to fix another still, and he was going over the selfsame road and through the same bog, sinking over his head every step he took; and, when he was right in the middle of it, he found a tap on his shoulder and lookin' round beheld the Devil, who reminded him of his prayer that he might take him if he ever went that way again.

"And now," says the Devil, "I have come for my due."

There was no way out of it, but to start away with the Devil, and the two of them started off on their journey. And, when they were coming near a town, says the Tinker to the Devil: "I'll be all ashamed, passin' through this town where everybody knows me, and them seein' you with me."

"Well," says the Devil, says he, "if you can contrive any way of hidin' me, I am willin' to be obligin'."

"I can that," says the Tinker, says he. "If you

only turn yourself into a bit o' lead in my budget, then, as I go through the town, no one will be any the wiser."

The Devil (for, to give him his dues, he was obliging) turned himself into a bit of lead at once, and the Tinker put him in his budget, hoisted the budget on his back and off with him.

In the middle o' the town there was a blacksmith's forge, and into the forge went the Tinker, and flung the budget on the anvil.

There were six big, strong fellows standing around, and the Tinker asked every one of them to take a sledge. "For," says he, "as I came along the road I found somethin' movin' in my budget, and I believe it's nothin' good. So the six of ye hammer at it for dear life till ye kill it."

Every one o' the six took a sledge, and the Devil he began to roar inside the budget, but out he couldn't get without the Tinker's liberty.

The six fellows began to lay on the budget with all the nerves of their heart; and, every time the sledge-hammer came down on him, the Devil gave a yell. And the louder he yelled the harder they hammered.

The whole town was alarmed by the Devil's screeching; and, at length and at last, when there was nothing else for it, up the Devil flies, budget

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and all, carried away the roof with him in a flame o' fire and disappeared.

Now, it wasn't long till the Tinker's wife had a young son, and she told him to go out and look for a sponsor for it.

The first man he met was the landlord, and he asked the Tinker where he was going.

"Lookin' for a sponsor for my child," says the Tinker.

"Will you take me as a sponsor?" says the landlord.

"I will not," says the Tinker, "for you are a sorry man. You've smiles for them that are rich, and nothin' but growls for them that are poor." And he passed on.

And the next he met was God, and he asked the Tinker to take him as a sponsor.

"I'll not have you," says the Tinker, "because you let stingy Bodach MacPartlan grow richer every day, while the poor Widow Managhan, who is helpless, is let grow poorer."

And then he went on, and the next he met was Death, and Death asked him: "Will you take me as sponsor?"

"Yes," says the Tinker, says he, "I'll take you; for you're the only fair and just man, and have

no more respect for the rich than you have for the poor.”

And he took Death home with him. And Death stood sponsor for his child.

“And now,” says Death to the Tinker, “since you favored me as you have done, and since you don’t seem to have much of a way on you, I would like to put you in a good way to rear up my god-son. So,” says he, “here’s a little bottle that will never be empty. Take it; and wherever you find any one sick, high or low, this bottle will cure them, provided,” says he, “that it isn’t their last sickness.”

“And how,” says the Tinker, says he, “am I to know?”

“I’ll tell you that,” says Death. “When you’re brought into a sick-room you will always see me standing either at the head or the foot of the bed. If I am standing at the bed-foot, you are at liberty to use the bottle and cure the patient, but if you see me standing at the bed-head, then you are not to interfere at your peril; for I have come for that sick man.”

The Tinker agreed to this, and thanked him right heartily. And then, all at once, he set up for a doctor.

Whenever there was any one sick, the Tinker

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of Tamlacht went; and three drops from his bottle cured them, if they were to be cured.

The fame of him spread far and fast, and he was soon known and sent for all over Ireland, England, Scotland and France. And he grew richer and richer, till a schoolmaster couldn't reckon all his gold on a midsummer day.

Now the King of Spain, he took bad; and, when all his doctors tried their hand on him, and gave him up, he heard tell of the Tinker of Tamlacht, that cured all men that he ever gave drink out of his bottle to, and he sent his ship to Ireland for him, and brought him over.

And, when the Tinker went into the King's bedroom, there he saw Death standing at the bed-head.

He made a pretense, of course, of feeling the King's pulse and looking at his tongue, and then says he: "My good man, you may make your will. I can do nothin' for you."

When the King heard this he commanded that the Tinker should give him three drops out of the bottle that cured all men, but the Tinker refused.

The King ordered his soldiers to take hold of him, and threatened to have him shot through



the heart there and then if he didn't give him the drink out of the bottle and cure him.

The Tinker was in a quandary.

Then says he: "Let every one else be cleared out of the room except myself and the King and four strong men."

This was done, and then the Tinker ordered the four strong men to take hold of the bed, every one by a post, and lift it right round, the foot where the head should be and the head where the foot should be. Then Death was standing at the King's feet. And the Tinker gave him the drink out of his bottle, and the King jumped up, alive and well again.

He loaded the Tinker with gold, and the Tinker set out for home. But he hadn't gone far when he found a hand on his shoulder, and who do you think it was but Death; and, as you may suppose, Death was in a towering rage, entirely.

Says Death, says he: "Didn't I warn you, on your peril, not to try to cure any man that you saw me waiting for? You have broken your bargain, so come with me yourself, now."

"Very well and good," says the Tinker, "sure it's a good time I've had, an' why shouldn't I be content to go?"

And, behold ye! as they went it happened they

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had to pass the little cabin where the Tinker used to live before he became rich and famous. The Tinker stopped forment his old little home, and says he, "One last request I have to ask."

"What is it?" says Death.

"It's small enough," says the Tinker. "I always had particular love for the apples on that tree in my garden—and if ye'd pull me one now to take with me it's happy I'd go."

"It's a small enough request," says Death, "and you'll have it."

Bad as Death was, he was not disobliging; so into the garden he goes to pull him an apple. But, when he put his hand on the apple, his hand stuck to the apple, and the apple stuck to the tree, and, if he was pulling and tugging from that day to this day, free from it Death couldn't get himself.

The Tinker, he never minded him, but went on and about his business as usual.

He left Death sticking to the tree for forty years, and during all that time he had a free hand and cured everybody, and there was now no one in the whole world dying. The Tinker was rollin' in wealth—lands and strands were his, and animals beyond count.

And, after forty years, the Tinker was passing

by the tree one day, and he looks at Death sticking to the tree, and says he to Death: "Is it there you are yet?"

"If you let me down," says Death, says he, "I will give you sparings for forty years."

The Tinker, bad-hearted never, agreed; and he let Death go. And there was plenty dying after that.

At the end of the forty years, Death came unexpected one night on the Tinker and told him his time was up.

"Very well and good," says the Tinker, "I've got out o' life all the joy there's in it, an' why shouldn't I go gladly!—Only," says he, "I must make a will before I go.—Will you give me till that candle burns out, and then I'll be with you."

Death said that was reasonable, and he would grant it.

And, when he said this, the Tinker blew out the candle, and says he: "You will have more than a week to wait."

And he took the bit of candle away, and buried it nineteen feet deep in a bog. And then he went to the world again rejoicin'.

Death watched by that bog for forty years more till the bog wore down to where the bit of candle was; and, when he got it, he burned it out

## THE TINKER OF TAMLACHT 95

and then set off for the Tinker, and said he would have to come with him now.

"I'm both ready and willin' to come now," says the Tinker, "for there's nothing left in life untasted. A long life and a full one I've had, and merry can I go.—But now," says he, "in all my enjoyin' of life, it's only too afeard I am that I haven't given much attention to my soul for the last hundred years or so. I would wish, if it's not too unreasonable, that you wait for me to say three Pater and Aves, to try and make my peace before I go with you."

"Well, it isn't unreasonable," says Death, "and I grant it with a heart and a half."

"Then," says the Tinker, "I'll never say a Pater and Ave more."

And Death, he went away in a rage; and no wonder!

Then, for near a hundred of years, the Tinker of Tamlacht was going about doctoring and curing, and piling up houses and houses full of wealth. And there was one night he was driving home from curing a man, and, passing over a bridge, he heard a great moaning and groaning underneath. It's the tender heart had the Tinker always and could never close his ears to the cry of distress.

“What’s wrong with you, my poor man?” calls the Tinker. “I’m the Tinker of Tamlacht, and I’ll soon cure you.”

“But you can’t cure me,” says he, “for I died three hundred years ago. There was a penance laid on me, when I was alive, to say three Pater and Aves for my sins, and I died without doing my penance; and I never got rest, and I never will, till a kind Christian does my penance for me.”

“Then I’ll soon release you, poor soul,” says the Tinker.

And down on his knees he dropped, there and then, and said them; and that minute Death jumped up, for it was Death was in it, and says he: “I have you at last!”

And with him the poor Tinker had to go this time, sure enough. He brought him first up to heaven, and, when they came to the gates, St. Peter asked: “Who have you here?”

“The Tinker of Tamlacht,” says Death, “and a long time I was waiting for him.”

“He’s the man,” says Peter, “that wouldn’t have God as sponsor for his child, so he’ll not come in here.”

“Well and good,” says Death. “We’ll try elsewhere.”

And the pair of them started off down to hell.

As they knocked at the gates there, the Devil inquired who he had.

“The Tinker of Tamlacht,” says Death.

“Take him away! take him away out of this!” says the Devil, says he, “for he’ll not get in here. I got enough of that lad,” says he, “and I’m sure I don’t want any more of him; he’d make hell too hot for us.”

“There you are,” says Death, says he; “you see your character’s everywhere afore you. What am I to do with you?”

“Well,” says the Tinker, “you took me away without me wishin’ for it, and now you must provide for me.”

Says Death: “I can’t provide for you, and, since no one will take you off my hands, I can’t be bothered with you any longer. What would you like yourself? I’ll do what I can for you.”

The Tinker thought, and says he: “I believe I’d like to be a strappin’ young fellow again of one-and-twenty and back in the world roamin’ it.”

Death agreed. He made him a strappin’ young fellow of one-an’-twenty, and left him back in Ireland again. And, from that day to this, the Tinker of Tamlacht hasn’t grown a day older. And he’s wandering Ireland ’round from end to

wynd, and from post to pillar wherever there's fun to be found.

He's at weddings and wakes and jolly christenings; and, if there's a fight in the fair, he's in the heart of it.

There's many's the man has met and chatted and drunk a bright glass with the gay, young stranger in one end of Ireland or the other, and thought him brave company, and jolly; but it's seldom they suspect, till long after, that they've been chatting and drinking with the Tinker of Tamlacht!

## VII

### THE MAN WHO WOULD DREAM

**M**ANNY MALONEY and his wife Nanny were as comfortable a pair as was in the countryside. They had a home on the side of Kilderry Hill that was as trig and snug and bright and warm as if it was built against heaven's walls, and a farm that gave finer spuds, and fuller corn, and fatter stock than e'er another in that barony, or the next to it. Nanny made the yellowest butter and reared the fattest calves that ever footed it into Donegal Fair, and Manny himself prospered with everything he put his hand to. Both for luck and lovesomeness, Manny and Nanny were patterns for the parish, and the world's envy.

One night in December, when Manny was smoking his pipe after supper by the fireside, with the dog drowsing to one side of him, and the cat to the other, and the cricket singing from his own chimney-corner, and Nanny without in the byre



milking, who should happen in but a strange beggar man coming from the Connaught side, who had put up for the night with Manny's next neighbor, Tully O'Gallagher, and who now wandered in for a *seanchus* (chat) before bedding.

A seat he took in the other chimney-corner from Manny, warmed his hands at the big, bright blaze, listened to the crickets and looked admiringly all around the snug warm kitchen. "I have fared far, and wandered wide," says the beggar man at length, "and chatted in many a man's chimney-corner, but 'tis rarely I've met up with a happier or peacefuller house than your own, Manny Maloney—may Heaven increase your joys to you! I'll wager the one button on my waistcoat that you're the contentedest man outside Connaught."

Manny, he took the pipe from his mouth, wiped it on his sleeve, and handed it across the fire to the beggar man, saying, "Take a *shoch* of the pipe. It'll maybe surprise you," says Manny, "if I say it, but though God has blest me beyond ordinary with the comforts of life, I'm neither happy nor content."

"Surprise me it does then, in troth," says the beggar man. "Would you insense me into the reason why?"

"I'd be the happiest being in the world, and Ire-

land, and the Isle of Man, only for one thing."

"And what's that thing?" says the beggar man.

Says Manny, "I don't dhraim at night."

"Oh-h-h!" says the beggar man.

Says Manny, "That's my one great deprivation, and I've never been rightly able to enjoy the good things God sent me, by reason of my fret over that."

The beggar man, he said nothing for a minute, but pulled hard at the pipe, with his elbows on his knees and he looking deep into the fire.

Says the beggar man then, straightening up, "What would it be worth to you, Manny, if I made you dhraim at night?"

"It would be worth half the world's wealth," says Manny. "And I won't begrudge giving you a cow for the favor."

"Very well," says the beggar man. Then puttin' his hand into his wallet, he groped there a while, and took from it something that Manny couldn't see. With this he went over to Manny and Nanny's bed, which was built into the out-shot not two yards from the kitchen fire, and was the country's admiration, by reason of its handsome hangings fixed on the ten foot high bed-posts that ran up almost to the roof on its front side. The beggar man *fissled* for a few minutes with the

bedtick, and to all intents slipped something inside it.

“Now,” says he, “Manny Maloney,” when he had that done, “there’s only one instruction that I have to give you. For this night you must sleep with your shoes on. And,” says he, “I’ll call in the morning for the cow.” Then he went off.

Seeing that he had to sleep with his shoes on, Manny, who knew how hard it was to reason Nanny into anything that was new or modern, waited till she had gone to bed and put the light out, before he fitted himself for bedding.

Very well and good. As they say in the stories, that fared well, and didn’t fare ill. But Manny had soon reason to be thankful that he had kept on his shoes—for he wasn’t well settled in bed, as it seemed to him, when Tully O’Gallagher came rattling at the window to rouse him, and hurried him out as fast as he could fly on a life and death matter. As Tully hastily explained to Manny while they flew forward, some pirates had come up from the shore, full with their booty and a princess whom they had carried from the West Indies, and put them into Diarmud’s cave, on the north end of Tully’s Alt, and then gone back to the coast again, likely for more supplies. The princess must be rescued before they returned, and if a bag or two

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of booty was rescued along with her, likewise, it wouldn't harm either Manny or Tully.

When Manny understood the strange happening that had happened, he left Tully behind, and went like the wind, without stop or pause till he reached the cave—and dived into it on hands and knees (for the entrance was low). The first thing he met with was two bags of booty, but he didn't stop for this, for the princess must be rescued. The next thing he met with was some kind of great, big, terrible wild beast or devil, with his eyes flashing fire, that the pirates had left guarding the princess, whose form he could just barely make out beyond the wild beast.

Like the courageous lad Manny always was, he dashed at the wild beast without waiting for the wild beast to dash at him, caught it by the throat like a hero, and though it screamed like a mad one, and struck out at him with two frightful fore-paws, he wrestled like a man resolved to choke it to death, and get the poor princess her freedom. But behold you, the very devils were against him, for the top of the cave began to come down on him to crush him. But rallying his courage and gathering his strength, and remembering the grand prize that he struggled for, Manny humped his back against the cave top and shot it up with such force

that it seemed to him he'd turned the whole hill over.

And then he heard callin' to him the voice of his wife Nanny, who'd come to his help. His heels were caught hold of, and he was jerked out of the cave with a mighty jerk, and there was Nanny standing over him on their own kitchen floor, sayin' "Bad 'cess to you, Manny, you've frightened the life out of my body. What the dickens are ye doin' under the bed anyhow—fightin' the cat and tryin' to turn the house over?"

Poor Manny was fearfully moidered. But, says he, "There's a princess from the West Indies in there a prisoner." And he dived under again, but all he could find was the remains of a side of bacon that the cat had dragged in and had been guzzling from.

"Well, well," says Manny, says he, "that's the strangest thing that I ever heard tell of." And then he laid down in bed again.

But when he was composing himself to sleep, he recollected that he hadn't locked the barn door, so he slipped out again, without Nancy's knowing it, and turned the key in the barn door, and was getting into the house again, when he caught sight of a light burning at the very top of the Fairy

## THE MAN WHO WOULD DREAM 105

Spink (cliff) which rose a hundred feet high just at the foot of his garden.

Going down to see what was the matter he found there were great goings on entirely at the top o' the spink—and he saw lights and heard singing and carousing above.

“’Tis the fairies,” says he, “holdin’ their midnight carousal.” And, remembering that if you come on them unknownst when they’re at their midnight games, they can’t refuse you any reasonable request, he started up the spink which was a mighty difficult task in the daylight, but at midnight it was no joke at all, at all. Great steering and engineering he had, till at length, when he’d almost reached the very top of it, shoving a way with his head through thick thorn bushes that grew there, all at once a whole covey of eagles and other wild birds of prey set on him with fearful screaming. And the poor fellow got stuck head and shoulders between the cliff and the bushes.

The eagles screamed and he screeched; they pounced upon him and he fought them. And, knowing not whether he’d meet his death at the beaks of the eagles above, or by a fall down the cliff with his bones smashed to smiddereens below, he fought all the fiercer and yelled all the louder. Till at length he found some one catch hold of

his heels, and give him such a mighty pull that taking half the thorn bushes with him, down he shot over the terrible spink with many a bump and fell in his sitting, at the foot, with the life, he was afraid, gone out of him entirely. And Nanny was standing over him and saying, "Musha, Manny, and what in the name of wonder were you doing up the chimney at midnight, fighting the jackdaws, and bellowing like a bull, smashing down their nests till you have half of my floor covered with the paraphernalia?"

"Dear, dear," says he, "was it indeed up the chimney I was?"

"Why," says she, "where did you think you were?"

Manny, he scratched his head, and says he, "Well, no matter. I suppose it's asleep we ought to be, Nanny."

"It's asleep I was twice this night," says Nanny, "when you wakened me up, with my heart pounding my ribs like a sledge-hammer for the fright."

"Very well, Nanny," he says, "go to your bed now, and you'll not be disturbed again."

Well and good. Nanny wasn't long till she was asleep. And Manny was very near asleep when he remembered that he had forgotten to fodder the cows. "Well, well," says he, "it's the

stupid fellow that I am. It's a sin to have them poor crayturs moaning all night without a grain of hay to put in their gizzard."

And when he was sure that Nanny was well asleep, he hopped out and went to the haggard. The coldest, frosty night it was he had ever experienced, but he climbed to the haystack, groped for the hay knife on the dash, and in the dark began to work hard to warm himself. He suddenly thought he found the hay knife going through something of a different texture from hay, and groping with his hands, and looking closer at the dash, the heart in him almost stopped beating when he saw what he had done. Some poor homeless creature had lain down to sleep on the hay-dash, and he had cut the head clean off him along with the hay, and the head had rolled off the dash on to the ground below.

In a pitiable plight was poor Manny and he says, "This means a morning's stroll with the hangman, now, Manny Maloney—bad endin' to ye." Off the dash he leapt, pulled down the body, took the head and fitted it to it, and behold you! in two minutes, so great was the frost that the head had frozen on again. And the man then opened his eyes and began shivering, and



says, "I am afeard I've taken my death of cold from sleeping out this fearful night."

"Poor fellow, poor fellow," says Manny, says he, "come inside till I warm you at the fire, and give you a hot drink."

"May God bless you!" says the poor fellow.

Manny took him in with him, sat him down in the chimney-corner, and rightly quick had a good, big, blazin' fire roaring in front of him and a skillet of good, rich, sweet milk heatin' up for him. He put ginger and spice into it, and gave him a big bowl of it steaming hot, saying, "Drink that, scalding hot, and 'twill warm the cockles o' your heart, and make a new man of you."

The poor fellow took hold of the big bowl of hot milk, and began sending it down his throat like a millrace, but behold you! between the heat of the fire without, and the heat of the hot milk within, didn't the joint of his neck thaw and the head fall off him again, and roll at Manny's feet!

Ochone! ochone! In a fearful condition was poor Manny. But taking the poor fellow's head, all at once he minded the pot of glue that Conal the carpenter, who was making some chairs for them, had left behind the door the day before. In quick time he had the glue on the fire, and melted, and laying a nice little layer of it on both

the broken neck and the head, he clapped the head on again. And so good was the glue that while you'd be saying "trap-sticks," the head was stuck, as fast as murder, and the fellow was asking what happened his bowl of milk.

But Manny put a roar out of him, for behold you! in his hurry didn't he clap on the head the wrong way, with the lad's face looking back instead of front. Before he'd be too late to undo it, he pulled the lad across his knees, and began breakin' his head off again—but so good was the glue that the devil a move or move would the head do, and the joint was the strongest part of the lad's whole body.

Says poor Manny, says he, "This is worse than murder, and hanging will be too light for me, when the crime's found out." So he caught hold of a sledge, and began trying to break the head off with it, but the unfortunate fellow instead of appreciating the spirit of what Manny was doing, began yelling, and screeching, and clawing, and biting at Manny, till, when he caught the fleshy part of Manny's arm in his teeth, poor Manny cried out at the top of his lungs. And some one caught hold of him by the neck, unlocked him from the lad—and his wife Nanny was standing over him by the fireside, and his dog, Branny, cow-

ering back, but still showing his teeth with a snarl in front of him. And Nanny was saying, "Musha, Manny, and what the dickens is the matter with you this blessed night anyhow, that you're goin' through all these nadiums? 'Tis the life ye near took from poor Branny.—Go to your bed," says she, "take your rest, and let me get mine."

Poor Manny didn't well know what to say, but sighed; and he went to his bed, and to sleep this time all right. And a right good, sound, peaceful sleep he was having, when there come a rattling at the door that would waken the dead. In right sweet, ill-temper he was, to be taken out of the good sleep that he had so well earned: but when he found it was Father Kelly on an urgent call, he forgave him. "Manny," says Father Kelly, "get up and throw on you as fast as you're able, and take this letter to the President of America. As it's a matter of life or death," says his Reverence, "if you can get it to him in the quickest possible time, you'll have my blessin' all your life after."

It was a great undertaking surely to be called on to do all of a sudden. But Manny would carry home in a creel all the stars of the sky to oblige Father Kelly. So he jumped out and threw on him, and bade good-by to Nancy, and

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away with him over the crown of Kilderry Hill. Going down the far side, the first thing he encountered was a fox who says to him, "The top o' the mornin' to you, Manny Maloney. Isn't it early you're out? May I ax what's your business?"

Says Manny, says he, "I have to run a message to America for Father Kelly. Could you tell if I am on the right way, or give me directions?"

Says the fox, says he, "If you go straight ahead, you can't miss it."

It wasn't morning yet when he came to the coast right on the cliffs of Slieve Liag. "And now," says Manny, says he to himself, "I'm at my journey's end." But that minute a big crane came sweeping by him and says he, "The top o' the mornin' to you, Manny Maloney. Where is it you're going?"

Says Manny, "I'm going to America on a message for Father Kelly, but the dickens a bit of me knows how I'm to get there."

"Here," says the crane, "just mount on my back, and I'll give you a lift part of the way, anyhow."

On the crane's back got Manny, and the crane spread his wings, and wafted with him out over the sea. But, lo and behold ye! when they

had been traveling a day and half a night, and were still only in the middle of the Ocean, the crane said, "Manny, I am getting mortal tired and can't bring you much further."

"And what am I to do?" says Manny.

"Myself doesn't know," says the crane, "but I suppose drowning is the only way out of it for you."

"Oh! *meelia-murder*," says Manny, says he, "that would be a low-down trick for you to play on a traveler that trusted you."

"I can't help it, anyhow," says the crane, says he, "some one of us has got to drown, and it won't be me. I'll give ye me davy o' that, me lad."

Manny and the crane begun to argue and debate, and in the middle of it, what should come by but a wild goose, who saluted Manny by name, and wished him the time o' night. "But," says he, "Manny, where are you going, or what's yourself and the bird arguing about?"

Says the crane, "Manny is making for America and I've carried him as far as I could hold out, and must let him go. Will you take him further?"

"Well," says the wild goose, "I'd like to oblige Manny, and I'll take him a bit of the way, anyhow. Get a hold of my leg here, Manny," says

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he. Then Manny caught hold of the wild goose's leg, and away with him over the ocean again in the direction of America. And after they had traveled for a day and half a night, and that the wild goose was beginning to tire, likewise, and Manny to get frightened again, what should they happen to overtake but a ship sailing for the States. "'Tis a happy chance for you, Manny," says the wild goose, "for I was afraid I'd have to drop you into the say." The wild goose swept down and left Manny perched on the tiptop of the biggest mast that the ship had.

Now there was a storm at the time, and the waves were running like mountains, and the ship was pitching and tossing from side to side. And poor Manny would be one minute hanging over the waves on the right side of the ship, and next minute hanging over the waves on the left side, and there he was hung and swung like a pendulum. And every minute he thought he'd be swung off to the bottom of the sea, but all the time he kept bawling for some one. And, hearing him, the Captain at length came out of the cabin, and looked up, shoutin', "Manny Maloney, what in the name o' Ned are you doing up there, anyhow, or do you want to break the top of my mast? Either come down or begone."

"Well, you see," says Manny, "I can't come down, not knowing whether I'm going to drop into the sea or not."

Says the Captain, "Take off your shoes, and throw them down when you think you are right over the deck—if the shoes alight on the ship, then you'll know you are safe, and can jump after them."

"It's a good idea," says Manny, unloosing both of his shoes. And when he thought he was over the deck he pelted down one after the other. Smash and crash they went right on the Captain's skull, causin' the Captain to put out of him two fearful yells. Then Manny gave another two, and next minute he found some one pulling him by the heels, and that made him yell all the louder, for he was certain sure he'd be drowned now. But so hard did they pull that they broke his hold on the mast, and he fell, fell, fell, right into the sea, putting the last drowning yell out of him.

And when he opened his eyes he was sprawling in his own bed, and Nanny standing over him, and she sayin', "You murdering villain, Manny Maloney, what do you mean anyhow climbing the top of the bedpost, and pelting your pair of shoes at your poor wife? 'Twas a miracle you



“‘It’s a good idea,’ says Manny, unloosing both of his shoes. And when he thought he was over the deck he pelted down one after the other.”—Page 114.





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didn't knock me brains out." And she said, "The sorra bit of me will trust myself to sleep in the same house with a madman this night, again."

Says poor Manny, says he, "Nanny, go to your bed, and take your sleep, and you'll not be annoyed more. With Heaven's blessing, I've got all the sleep I want for one night. I'll put on the fire and sit by it, till morning."

And he did so. And the first man who came in in the morning was the beggar man. And says he, "Manny, did you dhraim last night?"

"Is it dhraim?" says Manny. "I did all the dhraiming that I want to the day of doom."

"Then," says the beggar man, "your happiness is complete—give me my cow."

Says Manny, "Am I to dhraim as much every night as I did last night?"

Says the beggar man, "The first night of a man's dhraims he is only breaking himself in. You'll dhraim twice as much the next night, and in a fortnight O'Donnell's old Castle wouldn't hold all the dhraims you'll have."

"Nobbut," says Manny, says he, "I'll give you three cows if you deprive me again of the dhraiming power."

"Just as you please," says the beggar man, going over to the bed, *fissling* a while with the bed-

tick, and taking out of it a wild goose feather  
—which he burnt in the fire.

“Now, Manny,” says he, “you are as you were.”

Then says Manny, “May the heavens be your  
bed.”

And from that day out, all the world knew  
Manny Maloney to be a happy man—but no one  
of them knew it better than himself—and Nanny.

## VIII

### THE DAY OF THE SCHOLARS

**I**T is a lee and long while now since the days of Fergal the Scholar; and the man who lived then hasn't had a toothache for a thousand years. In them days the scholars of Ireland were known and noted to the world's four corners. And Ireland's notorious scholars, after they had learned everything there was to learn in the world, grew so proud and pompostious of their own greatness that they went traveling among one another, and east and west as well, challenging everybody to meet them in contests, the craziest they could think of. Whenever or wherever one of these extraordinary contests of learning was announced between two of the great, proud scholars, the doctor would leave his patient before he had him dead, and the groom would leave the bride before he had kissed her, and the sentry his post though he seen an invading army coming, and the king his crown, and the beggar his bag—every one of them breaking their neck to

see who'd be on the ground first. So mad, at last, did the whole land become over these contests, that the country was going to pot out and out, neither child nor chief caring what happened it, so long as there were fools enough to argue with them which scholar of all Ireland was best.

When the rage had reached its height, the scholars surrounded with such fame as had never been known before, and the country looking ruination in the face, a scholar of scholars, who was named above all others, Fergal the Scholar,—who, after he had learned the last thing that was to be learnt in Ireland, visited every college in Europe and Asia, and challenging and contesting with the greatest philosophers of them, coming out victorious, and adding something new to his wonderful knowledge in every fresh country he traveled,—came back to Ireland, all the world ringing with his name and his fame,—and came to his own native Kerry.

Every scholar in Ireland trembled like a winkle-straw when they heard of Fergal's coming.

Fergal didn't eat a pick nor close an eye, after he landed in Kerry, till he had sent a challenge to the High King of Ireland at Tara, for the greatest of the great scholars, which the King always had to maintain in flocks round his court,

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to meet him in a final contest for the world's championship—a contest in which not a word was to be permitted, only sign language. And he named a day and a date when he would appear at Tara, to give it its choice of either fame or shame eternal.

Now, the High King at Tara at this time was a man of such good common sense that there was no telling what minute the scholars would raise the nation against him, and take the crown from him in disgrace: and when he'd get up in the morning he'd always feel for his head the first thing—to see if they had still left it on his shoulders. When he got this challenge from Fergal the Scholar, he was—inside of himself—the maddest man his kingdom knew. All of his court, though, were full of rejoicement—except the scholars. The King's scholars were the talk of the world, for they had beaten and vanquished everything that ever came before them up to this. They now, however, knew that there was no standing up to Fergal the Scholar, who had bate all Europe out of a clean face, and would surely bate and disgrace them for evermore.

The nearer drew the day Fergal had named for the big contest, the worse grew the plight of the King's scholars, and heart-breaking was the woe

and wailin' among them. At last, in a crowd they came before the King, and begged that he would invent some way of saving them and saving his court from disgrace in the world's face.

And, in troth,—for their plight would melt the heart of a whin-stone—the King's heart was touched for them. Then he got neither ease nor peace, worrying out what he could do.

Now, the King had heard tell, at various times, of a mighty knowledgeable little black-whiskered man, that they called Dark Patrick, who lived among the hills of Donegal, and who, though he had never seen the inside of a college, or looked between the covers of a book in his life, was known far and wide for his extraordinary cleverness, common sense, and wisdom—and a man who, though he had unraveled many a wonderful puzzle when the need called him, was still as humble as he was poor, and lived quiet and peaceful in his own little hut, tilling his own patch of land, and desiring nothing greater than the respect of his neighbors, who were as poor as himself.

The King sent a courier to Donegal to fetch Dark Patrick back with him to the palace at Tara. And to Patrick the King gave in his case, asking what he could do to help him.

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Dark Patrick he shook his head. "I don't know," he said. "This learning is a wonderful thing. But I'll do my best, and the best can do no more."

"That's so," says the King, all resigned.

Dark Patrick then set about making inquiries to find out if there was at the King's court such a thing as a man who had never learned to know B from a bull's foot. And every one agreed that Johnny-One-Eye, the apple huckster's son, was not only the ignorantest man at court, but you might drag Ireland with a herring net and not find a stupider.

"Then," says Patrick, "'tis Johnny-One-Eye is going to overthrow Fergal the Scholar."

The learned ones of the court rose in uproar at this, and asked the King was he going to let this country clown, Dark Patrick from Donegal, bring eternal disgrace upon him, and them, and the nation.

Says Patrick: "My lord, maybe some of the learned gentlemen themselves is willing to undertake to meet and defeat Fergal. If so, then your good name is saved, and you have no use for me, so I'll be bidding you good morning, and pushing for the North again." He looked all round the great scholars to see which of them was going to



volunteer to meet Fergal. But one scholar looked at the other, and the other looked at the one; and the heart of every man o' them sunk to his boots, and there wasn't a soul among them had the courage to look the King in the face and say, "I'll meet Fergal."

"Then," says the King, "when ye'll not undertake one of ye to meet Fergal yourselves, ye haven't any right to interfere with this good man in whatsoever arrangement it pleases him to make."

Well and good. The great Fergal himself arrived, at last, with a terrible retinue of all the scholars of Munster in his train. And he'd scarce bow to the King, so great and proud was he. But he swept into the grand hall that had been cleared for the contest,—him and all his flock of shining scholars,—and he seated himself on a throne on one side of the platform in view of all the multitude—the scholars and the nobles and the great men who now filled the hall to bursting. And he called for the champion who was to contest with him.

Though the King's scholars were looking black in the face, there was thousands of men there had to stuff the tails of their coats in their mouths when they seen Johnny-One-Eye led in, in a pro-

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fessor's rig-out, and handed on to the platform, and seated on a throne fornenst the wonderful Fergal.

Fergal, with a curl on his lip, was viewing the champion who was to oppose him. The disdainful look that Johnny-One-Eye gave him in return delighted the hall-full, and rejoiced the heart of the King.

When he seen that everything was ready, the King sounded a bell, which was to be the signal for the champions to begin the greatest contest Ireland ever knew, or ever would know.

Fergal the Scholar opened the ball. He held up one finger towards his opponent. And the minute he did so, Johnny put up two fingers towards him. On the heels of that Fergal hoisted three fingers. Then the King's champion presented a closed fist. Fergal next put up a ripe strawberry, and Johnny-One-Eye put up a green gooseberry. The people, who were terribly anxious, quickly judged that, whatever it all meant, things were going hard against Johnny, for he was going black in the face with rage.

Fergal in another jiffy had up an apple that he took out of his pocket; then Johnny put up half a loaf of bread that he drew from under his coat. He was near foaming at the mouth now,

with rage, the people seen, while Fergal was as cool as a thout in a pool.

Fergal next put the apple to his mouth and took a bite out of it; and the minute he did so, Johnny ups with the loaf, let it fly at Fergal's head, and laid him out like a corpse!

The King's scholars all jumped to their feet to propose that Johnny-One-Eye should be drawn and quartered, when, before they had time to get out their first words, Fergal the Scholar, who was on his feet quick and fast, crossed the platform to Johnny, took his hand in both of his, and shook it. Then, turning to all the dumbfounded people in the hall, Fergal said: "Gentlemen, I freely and publicly confess that, for the first time in his long career, Fergal the Scholar has been outmatched."

Every soul there was thunderstruck!

"I've traveled far," went on Fergal, again, "gone to many famous colleges, and contended with the world's most wonderful scholars, but I had to come among the High King's scholars at Tara," says he, "to meet this most supremely notable and extraordinary scholar, who, because his great learning exceeds all that I ever thought was in the power of mortal man, has overthrown me. I am not only beaten, but actually proud

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of the distinction of being beaten by such an extraordinary genius."

Says the King, getting to his feet: "Would ye kindly explain to these assembled gentlemen all that passed between you and my champion?"

"I'll do that," says Fergal. "I first put up one finger, signifying that there was one God: which this profoundly learned gentleman well answered by putting up two fingers—meaning to say the Father had two other Persons along with Him. Then, thinking I had him caught, I next put up three fingers, which meant, 'Then aren't there three gods?' But your great doctor rose to the occasion, for he immediately closed his fist, indicating that they all together made one.

"I held up a red strawberry to indicate that life is sweet: and your great doctor answered, with a green gooseberry, that life wasn't by any means all sweet, but was improved by having a judicious blending of the sour blent with it. Myself showed an apple to exemplify that, according to the Bible, fruit was the first and natural food of man: the scholarly doctor corrected me by exhibiting a loaf of bread—meaning to say that bread was the staff of life, and that man was ordained to eat it in the sweat of his brow.

"Then, calling up all my brains and all my

learning and inspiration, I took a bite out of my apple which meant to say, 'I have ye at last; explain that if ye can.' And, lo, and behold ye! this most honorable and extraordinary genius, without giving me time to wink an eye, hurled his loaf at me and laid me out flat—in exemplification, as ye know, that 'twas the biting of the apple caused the Fall o' Man. I'm done!" says Fergal the Scholar. "My disgrace is everlasting and complete. I only ask to be allowed to depart in peace, and be for evermore forgotten."

And in shame and disgrace, with their heads between their legs, Fergal the Scholar and all his retinue—the greatest scholars of Munster—departed from the King's palace.

'Round Johnny-One-Eye (who had been listening, with mouth open, to Fergal's speech) all the King's scholars and great doctors gathered, hoisting him on their shoulders, and nine times circumnavigatin' with him the King's castle yard. Then they made the King hang him with all the medals, degrees and learned orders of the kingdom, till the poor fellow's back bent to the breaking-point.

"Now," says the King, says he, getting up from his throne, "there's one man we're forgetting, and 'twould ill become us not to remember and honor

him. I call upon Dark Patrick," says he, "from Donegal, wherever he is, to come forth."

In a far-back corner of the room, under the choir-loft, a little dark-whiskered man stood up and made his obadiance to the King.

"Dark Patrick," says the King to the little black man from Donegal, "I have a fancy that I'd like to keep you about my court, and give you any salary you name, for doing nothing only just being handy any time I take the notion to seek your advice. Name your salary—and, no matter what it is, it'll be yours."

"Me lord," says Dark Patrick, "I humbly thank you with all my heart for your gracious goodness to one so unworthy. But you'll pardon me if, before replying to your demand, I request an Irishman's privilege of asking a question?"

"Certainly," says the King.

And says Dark Patrick, turning towards the seat where Johnny-One-Eye, all bewilderment, was stooping under his medals: "It is of the learned doctor on the platform," indicating Johnny, "that I'd ask the question.

"Fergal the Scholar," he went on, "kindly entertained this assembly to his point of view of the deaf-and-dumb discussion that passed between you, and by means of which you, with your

genius, floored the first scholar in the world. Now would you kindly honor this assembly with *your* account of the transaction?"

"Faith," says Johnny—I mean the learned doctor—"I'll do that same!—For 'twas mighty straight and simple. The lad ye put up again' me," says he, "was the most ill-bred vagabone I ever had the bad fortune to cross in all my travels. He started by a remark on my personal peculiarities—holdin' up one finger to taunt me that I'd only one eye. As mad as a March hare, I put up two fingers to show that my one eye was as good as his two. Then carrying his taunts further, he got up three fingers to draw an ill-natured laugh out of ye, for that here were two men with only three eyes in their company. I shut my fist at him to let him know what was waitin' for him if he didn't quick change his tune. He ups with a strawberry to tell me he didn't care that for me: I ups with a green gooseberry to let him know back again I didn't care that for him, or all his breed, seed, and generation. When the mean fellow ups with an apple to tell me that I was an apple-huckster's son, meself pulls out tuppence worth of bread that I was bringing home for my dinner when yous caught me and hauled me in here—I ups with the bread for to

let him know if he didn't stop taunting me I'd very quick brain him. But the impudent fellow was bent on his own ruination, for he immediately put the apple to his mouth and took a bite out of it, to remind me that when I was a youngster I used to steal my poor old crippled mother's apples and run away and ate them. That was the last straw—I let him have the loaf between the two eyes and stiffened him. 'Twas a great victory, so it was," says the innocent poor fellow.

"A great victory, entirely," says Dark Patrick. "And," says he, to Johnny, "I congratulate yourself, most learned sir, and all the other learned scholars here, on this most wonderful triumph."

"A terrible triumph, it surely was!" says the King, says he, taking a pinch of snuff. "And," says he, "I command that you, learned gentlemen, lead your new High Chief Doctor to the grandest suite of rooms your end of the castle knows, and attend on him with all reverence and honor henceforward.—And now, as to yourself, Dark Patrick?" says the King, says he.

"Just, me lord," says Dark Patrick, "what I was coming to. For your most generous offer to meself, me lord," says he, "I regret I must reluctantly decline it. The likes of me, an ignorant



poor mountain-man, would be wofully out o' place in a court that is inhabited by such great learned gentlemen as these I have the honor to see round me. Learning," says he, "is a wonderful thing, surely. I heartily and humbly thank ye, me lord," says he, making his obadience to the King, "and good-by! 'Tis time I wa. shortening the road to my little cabin in the bogs of Donegal."

The King himself strove hard to hold him. But 'twas no use. Patrick hoisted on his stick the little bundle he traveled with; and them that looked after, soon saw him stepping out lonely, but bravely, on the road to the North.

## IX

### DONAL O'DONNELL'S STANDING ARMY

**I**T wasn't in my time, it wasn't in my father's, nor it wasn't in his father's time, before him; but for all that it wasn't so very, very long since, that a man named Donal O'Donnell, and his wife Sally, lived in a wee house on a hill beyont there, without any children at all, at all, though they'd been married a couple of score years, and were getting old now.

Anyhow, hard times come down upon Donal and Sally, and poverty slouched in at the door; and it went from hard to harder until at long and at last one morning that Donal got up, they hadn't an eatable pick within the four walls of the house. Sally, she wasn't the sweetest-tempered woman in the world at the best of times, and surely her tongue and her temper were small comfort to Donal now that the world went again' them. But this morning, she tongue-banged him beyont the beyonts, and told him to be off with

him, and not to come back till he had got something to put them out of their poverty.

Poor Donal, he didn't say much, for that was the sort of man he was anyhow; but he spat on his stick and traveled on afore him for the length of a lee-long summer day.

In the evening he laid down on a green knoll, far and far and very far from his own home—and he feelin' down-hearted entirely, for he saw little hopes of finding anything to put himself and Sally out of their poverty.

Not long was he stretched on the knoll when he heard music and noise. Looking about him, he saw a wee, round hollow hollowed out o' the top of the knoll—and, lo and behold ye! down in the bottom of this hollow were hundreds and hundreds of wee people singing, dancing and feasting. There were tables and tables outspread with white tablecloths, and the most entizin' eatables and drinkables that Donal ever beheld in his life before. His mouth, as you may well suspect, watered at the sight. He craned his head over the edge, and put three roars out of him, that created mortal consternation below. The Little People suspinded their dancing, their feasting, and fun-making, and huddled together with the fright.

But one of them, bolder than the others, a little lad with a red jacket and cap, come climbing up the side to Donal. "Donal, Donal," says he, "what's wrong with you, or what do you want?"

"By this and by that," says Donal, says he, "I'll go down and not leave two of you alive, nor two pieces of one of you together, unless you send me up something to put myself and Sally out of our poverty."

"If you don't harm us," says the Wee Red Man, "we'll soon do that."

So the Wee Red Man went down to consult, and 'twas short time till he was up again, and with him a wee Blue Duck which he gave to Donal, saying, "Neither yourself nor Sally need ever be in poverty any more, for every time you say 'Blue Duck, Blue Duck,' to this animal, it will lay you a golden egg." Donal there and then set down the Blue Duck to try it, and said "Blue Duck, Blue Duck," and all at once the Blue Duck laid him a golden egg.

Right hearty, Donal thanked the Wee Red Man, and putting the Blue Duck under his coat, spit on his staff and started back again, late as it was. And it's him was the hilarious happy man, as he footed it for home.

Lo, and behold ye! the dark night came down

on Donal while he was on his way. And reachin' a house on the roadside, he said to himself he'd put up there for the night; so in he stepped, askin' for supper and a shakedown.

They gave him his supper, and a shakedown in the corner. But before he bedded Donal handed them the Blue Duck to take charge of, saying, "Take prime care of that wee Blue Duck for me; and above all things," says he, "on the peril of your life, don't any of you say 'Blue Duck, Blue Duck,' to it, till you give it back to me in the morning."

"Oh, no," says they, "we'll surely not. For why should we do so?"

No sooner, though, was Donal safe in bed, and he asleep, than the woman of the house took out the Blue Duck to have a look at it. And says she: "We'll just say 'Blue Duck! Blue Duck!' to it for the fun o' the thing, till we see what'll happen." So they set the Blue Duck on a nest, and said "Blue Duck, Blue Duck," and all at once the Blue Duck laid them a golden egg.

"By this and by that," says they, "'tis the most wonderful thing we ever knew or heard tell of, and 'twould be a pity for us to lose that duck, because we'll never be poor again while we have it."

No sooner said than done. They changed the duck for another of their own, that looked as like it as two peas; and in the morning, Donal went off with their Blue Duck under his arm, instead of the one the fairies gave him.

'Twas little grass grew under his heels till Donal was home. And when he was home, he wasn't in at the door till he told Sally: "Sally dear, we're never going to be poor any more," says he.

"I'm glad of it," says Sally. "Why aren't we?"

"Because," says he, "here's a wee Blue Duck I have with me, and all you need say to it is, 'Blue Duck, Blue Duck,' and it will lay a golden egg every time."

"Well, well," says Sally, "that's the most wonderful thing ever I heard tell of. Try it till we see."

"I'll not try it," says he, "till you gather all the neighbours, that we may water their mouths by them seeing it, too."

It's quickly Sally skipped off, and in rapid time the wonderful news had overrun the country like moor afire; and the neighbours were thronging in and filling Donal's house from the hearthstone to the threshold.

When they were all in, says Donal, "Now keep your eyes open, boys, for the performance is going to commence."

He made a nice wee nest of hay for the duck, on the table, and on it he set the little animal, and says he to it, "Blue Duck! Blue Duck!" But never an egg did the Blue Duck lay.

Says Donal, says he, "I didn't say it loud enough that time." And says he now, "Blue Duck! Blue Duck!" louder than before. But never an egg, neither gold, silver, nor brass, appeared. Poor Donal was in a quandary. Says he, "It's deaf that duck has got since last night, but 'twill hear me this time, or I'll know the reason why."

And this time he shouted: "Blue Duck, Blue Duck," so that the rafters dinnled, and the people had to put their fingers in their ears. But instead of laying a golden egg, the duck was so frightened that it up and flew round the house, screeching, and swiping the eyes out of the people with its wings.

Then all the people, as mad as a houseful o' hatters, begun bawlin' that Donal had made fools o' them. And they fell on him and gave him a great drubbing entirely.

But if the neighbours were sevir on him, Sally

lost all her patience, and was ten times more so. And it's he was the sore and sorry man.

The very next morning Sally turned him out of the house again, and told him not to come back this time till he'd surely have something to put them out of their poverty.

Away and away before him poor Donal traveled this time again, for the length of the lee-long summer's day. And that evening he reached again the self-same green knoll, and threw himself down on it—for he was tired out and not able to stir a step further. Just as on the evening before, he wasn't lying there many minutes when he heard great singing and music. Up he gets and looks down into the wee round hole in the top of the knoll, and there he sees hundreds and hundreds of the Little People, singing, dancing, feasting, and merry-making. Donal craned his neck over, and he let three wild roars out of him, and all at once the party below was thrown into great consternation; but up comes the fellow in the little red jacket again, climbing to Donal.

"Donal, Donal," says he, "what's the matter? or what do you want now?"

"A nice way you handled me," says Donal, says he—and he up and told how the duck refused to lay at all, at all, when he went home and had the



neighbours gathered. "That was a nice thing to do, wasn't it, or not?" says Donal. "And by this and by that," says he, "I have come now to destroy all of you, and destroy all of you I will. I'll not leave one of you alive, nor two pieces of you together."

"Oh!" says the Wee Red Man, "what would you take, and not do that?"

"Well," says Donal, says he, "if you want to live you had better give me, quick, something that will put Sally and myself out of our poverty."

Down into the hollow again went the Wee Red Man, and not long was he below till he come back with a napkin. Says he, "Here's a napkin, and whenever you spread it out, and say: 'Napkin! Napkin! serve all sorts,' it will be a big tablecloth covered with the rarest eatables and drinkables that were ever known—enough for a hundred men. And as long as you mind that," says he, "yourself and Sally will never be in poverty."

"Let me try it," says Donal, "and see; for I'm purty hungry this minute anyhow."

Down then on the grass he laid the napkin, and says he, "Napkin! Napkin! serve all sorts." And such a feast as was on the napkin before him he'd never beheld in his life before. A right hearty meal he made, and then got up, rolled up the

napkin, put it in his pocket, and started for home.

But the night and the darkness came down on him again, when he had got to the same wee house on the roadside. So he said he would stop there for the night; and he went in and asked for a supper and a bed.

They welcomed Donal, and said he was surely heartily welcome to both. And when Donal had eaten his supper they showed him to a bed in the room above. But before he went to his bed he gave the woman of the house charge of his napkin, saying, "This little napkin I'm very particular about, and I want you to keep it safe for me till morning; but above all things," says he, "and on the peril of your life, don't spread it out, and say to it, 'Napkin! Napkin! serve all sorts.'"

The woman says, "Surely no. For why should we do that?"

And to his bed then, went Donal. But when they had Donal in bed and asleep, says the woman, says she, "I wonder why it is that Donal doesn't want us to spread out that napkin, and say 'Napkin! Napkin! serve all sorts'—for the fun of the thing I'd just like to see." So on the table she spread the napkin, and said, "Napkin! Napkin! serve all sorts." At once a tablecloth covered the table and such a feast as was spread of all good

things that ever were known, eatable or drinkable, she had never seen before, nor ever dreamt of. And all in the house sat down, and ate a great meal, entirely.

Then they said it would be a pity to let such a fine thing as that go away with Donal. So they took and changed it for another wee napkin that had the self-same appearance; and the woman gave this other wee napkin to Donal in the morning.

He thanked her and set out for home. When he reached home Sally met him, and says she:

“Well, I hope you had better luck this time.”

“I had that, Sally,” says Donal. “We’ll now never know poverty nor want more.”

“How is that?” says Sally.

“Because,” says he, “here’s a little napkin, and whenever we’re hungry or thirsty, all we have to do is spread it on the table and say to it: ‘Napkin! Napkin! serve all sorts’ and there will be instantly spread a feast for a hundred men.”

“Well, well,” says Sally, says she, “that’s very wonderful, entirely. Spread it there till we see.”

“Oh, no, no,” says Donal, says he, “we want to have the crow over the neighbours this time. So I’ll not spread it out till you ask them all in,

and then we'll give them a feast that will water their mouths for a month after."

Well and good. Off went Sally with the news, and in a short time the whole country was alarmed of the wonderful napkin that Donal had back with him this night; and all of them came flocking to Donal's, and filled the house from hearthstone to threshold.

And when they were all there, "Now," says Donal, says he, "keep your eyes open, for the performance is about to begin."

On a table in the center of the floor he spread out the napkin, and says he: "Napkin! Napkin! serve all sorts." But the sorra a crumb appeared on the napkin. And poor Donal then shouted at it, and roared and bawled, yelled and screeched at it. But if he was to screech till he tore the roof off the house, sorra eatable nor drinkable would come on the napkin.

"Well, well, well," says Donal, says he, quite downhearted entirely, "that beats the wee wheel that ground the millstone."

But the neighbours all fell on him, and gave him a great drubbing out and out, for cheating them this second time again.

But if they ill-used him badly, Sally ill-used

him ten times as badly when they went away—and a sore and a sorry man was poor Donal.

The very next morning, off Sally turned poor Donal again, and told him that if he wouldn't this time find something to put them out of their poverty, not to dare to show his nose to her ever again. With his heart in his boots off my poor Donal tramped, away and away for the length of the lee-long summer's day, till evening came and he was tired out and ready to drop.

He reached the same green knoll once more, and threw himself down on it. But not long he was lying, till, as on the evening before, he heard the singing and the music. And looking down into the hollow in the crown of the knoll again, there he saw crowds upon crowds of Little People singing and dancing, feasting and carousing. Donal put three great roars out of him that immediately threw the whole party into great consternation.

At once the little man in the red jacket came climbing up to Donal, and says he, "Donal, Donal, what's the matter, or what's wrong with you now?"

Says Donal, says he, "I'll have the life of every soul of ye, and I'll not leave two pieces of one of you together, for the way you have handled

me," commencing and telling how the napkin was of no more use to him than the duck.

Says the Wee Man, says he: "Did you stop anywhere from when you left here till you got home?"

"I stopped nowhere," says Donal, says he, "only in a decent house by the roadside, where I lodged."

"Oh!" says the Wee Man, says he, "just hold on there a minute until I see what can be done."

Down he went to the Little People again, and after a while came up with a caubeen (little rimless hat). "Here," says he, "Donal, is something that will help you. Any time you lay this caubeen on the ground and say to it, 'Caubeen! Caubeen! do your duty,' there will jump out of it ten Wee Men with blackthorns, squaring the sticks over their heads, and nothing on two feet will be able to withstand them."

"That's very wonderful entirely," says Donal, says he, "I would like to try it."

So down on the grass he sets the caubeen, and says, "Caubeen! Caubeen! do your duty," and out of it jumps ten funny Wee Men with blackthorns, squaring the sticks over their heads, and looking all around them for the foe.

Then Donal put them in again, and says he to

the Wee Man: "That's surely a wonderful thing, but, after all, a present of ten Wee Men with blackthorns is but a very dawny way of helping myself and Sally. In our poverty we're not able to feed ourselves," says he, "and how do you expect that we're to be helped by having a standing army to support likewise?"

Says the Wee Man: "In that house you stayed in two nights, they took away your napkin and your blue duck, and gave you, instead, their own, which were no use. Take this caubeen and go to that house, and demand back your napkin and your duck. When they refuse to give them," says he, "just lay the caubeen on the floor, and say 'Caubeen! Caubeen! do your duty,' and it won't be long until you have your duck and your napkin. Fetch them home to Sally then, and you'll never want for meat or drink or gold; and you'll have an undaunted standing army, moreover, all the rest of your life."

"Well," says Donal, says he, "that's a very fine thing surely." And he thanked the Wee Red Man, and set out.

That night he reached the house by the roadside, and went in, and with many a word of blarney to the father, mother, and all, asked for supper and bed.

They welcomed Donal heartily, and said he would surely have both, with a heart and a half. And before he went off to bed he handed over the caubeen to the woman of the house, saying he wanted her to take particular care of it till morning. "But above all," says Donal, says he, "I want ye to be sure, and on the peril of your life not to say to it, 'Caubeen! Caubeen! do your duty.'"

"No, we will not," says the woman. "For why should we do that?"

But me brave Donal wasn't long in bed, and he pretending to be very fast asleep entirely, when the woman took out the caubeen to look at it, and says she, "I wonder why it is that he warned us to be sure and not say to it, 'Caubeen! Caubeen! do your duty'? Just for the fun of it," says she, "I should like to try it." So, laying the caubeen down, she says, "Caubeen! Caubeen! do your duty"—and out springs ten little men with blackthorns, squares them over their heads, and rushes at the people of the house, and begins to ludher, and thrash, and wallop, and whack them one and all, but the mother in particular—making them hop and skip and jump, roar and yell, up the house and down the house and round the house. Then the people of the house ran to the



room where Donal was breaking his heart laughing, and begged and beseeched of him, for all sakes, to call off his men.

“Not,” says Donald, says he, “till ye produce my napkin and my Blue Duck.”

Oh, they said they would do anything and everything for him if he would only call off them terrible fellows that were ludhering the souls out of them.

And in very quick time, you may be sure, they got Donal his napkin and his duck.

But Donal waited till his army had given them, the family and the father and the mother, a right sound whacking first. Then he called them off, and put them into the caubeen again, and with the three set out for home.

When he reached home next day, Sally met him, and says she: “I hope you have brought us something this day to put us out of our poverty.”

“Oh, yes,” says Donal, says he, “I have very wonderful things entirely for you this time, and we’ll never know want any more.”

“What is it you have?” says Sally, says she.

“I’ll not tell you that,” says Donal, “till you get in all the neighbours that they may enjoy it.”

And in very quick time all the countryside was flocking into Donal’s, and they nudging and

laughing among themselves, expecting things to turn out as they had on the two nights before.

But first when Donal had them altogether in the house, he laid down the Blue Duck on a nest and said: "Blue Duck! Blue Duck!" And the eyes of them grew the size o' small teacups with wonder, when they saw the lovely golden egg the Blue Duck had laid.

"Ye think that wonderful," says Donal, "but it's nothing to what I'm going to show ye yet."

Then he spread his napkin on the table, and says he: "Napkin! Napkin! serve all sorts." And instantly there was eating and drinking on it for a hundred men; and the neighbours made the greatest feast they had ever made in their lives before. And they wondered and wondered and wondered again at the strange luck of Donal.

When they had eaten and drunk their hearty fill, Donal said: "But I've the greatest wonder of all to show you yet." And down on the table he sets the caubeen, and says he: "Caubeen! Caubeen! do your duty," when out jumps ten Wee Men brandishing their blackthorns, and starts to lay on the neighbours.

The ten Wee Men walloped and whacked, and ludhered and thrashed the people, right, left and center: and the neighbours yelled, and screamed,

and bawled, and screeched, and hopped and jumped all round and round the house, while Donal stood by the fire with his hands behind his back, looking on and laughing loud and hearty—delightin' to hear the neighbours implorin' him for all sakes to call off his men.

But off or off Donal didn't call them, till they had given the neighbours the thrashing they deserved, and the soundest thrashing they had ever got in their lives before, hardly leaving a whole bone in their bodies. Then, by Donal's orders, the ten men ludhered and lathered the neighbours out of the door, and went into their caubeen again.

All this time Sally had been in the corner looking on in consternation.

"Now, Sally," says Donal, says he, "your temper hasn't been as sweet as it might have been, lately; and I think a little of the same medicine mightn't harm you." So says he to the caubeen: "Caubeen! Caubeen! do your duty!" and out jumps the ten Wee Men again, and laid on Sally, and thrashed and whacked her up the kitchen, and down the kitchen, and round the kitchen—while she jumped, skipped and yelled to Donal to take off his men.

But Donal stood by the fire with his hands behind his back, laughing his hearty skinful. He

waited till they had given Sally the father and mother of a good sound bleaching, and then he called them off and put them into the caubeen again.

Then, "Sally," says he, "I think that little lesson will do ye a world o' good for the remainder of your days."

And it did, for she was very careful never to lose her temper again with Donal, when he didn't deserve it.

By means of his duck, Donal built a great castle with a window for every day in the year. By virtue of his napkin, he gave dinners, feasts, and parties that were never equalled in that country or in this. Open house he kept to all the world, and no poor person left his door but was the richer for a bright gold-piece in his pocket.

He was his own King, and had his own standin' army all the days of his life after. Sally became an obedient, sweet-tempered woman, and a parable of a good wife. And for the remainder of their lives she and Donal lived content and happy as the hares in harvest.

## X

### THE PARVARTED BACHELOR

**I**N them days, or thereabout, when our great grandfather's great grandfathers were youngsters, there was a lad who lived in the neighbourhood of Dublin, named Rody, that the neighbours called "Rody the Bachelor" by reason it's small *gradh* he had for the women, and people thought he'd no more marry than he'd give his head for a football.

Rody was warm and well-to-do, with a snug farm and a thrig house, milk cows, and dry cattle *go leor*. He was happy as a hedge-sparrow to all seemin', and lived in ease and content with himself and the whole world. When at a wake, wedding, or spree, the neighbours quizzed Rody why he didn't marry and take a wife to himself, Rody always laid down his doctrine to them—"I'm as happy," he used to say, "as the Lord (thanks be to Him!) can make me. I have peace, grace, and content; and what more does a man need? Them takes a woman takes trouble, and

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them marries makes worry for themselves. Yous often enough say, yourselves, 'No cow, no care,' and I say, 'No woman, no woe.' If I got the best woman in the world, she couldn't like me better nor I like meself. So, all things consithered, it seems to me that 'tis me is the wisest man o' ye, to keep meself happy when I find meself so." And that was, time and again, the burden of Rody the Bachelor's song.

But, sirs, wonders will never cease. Behold ye! there was a slip of a black-eyed *girseach*, one o' the neighbour's daughters, come to milk the cows morning and evening for Rody one time when his hand took bad with the whittle, and he couldn't milk himself. And Una—she was named Una—she used to sing, "*An Cailin Deas Cruite na m-Bo*"—The Pretty Girl Milking the Cow—to keep the beast quiet while she milked her; and Rody would be standing by the cow's head scratching Brawney's neck to keep her quiet likewise. But be the time Rody's hand was better of the whittle, he persuaded Una to continue coming to milk because the cows milked better, he found, to a woman; and Una, without much persuasion, consented. And the neighbours they all said: "Ay, ay!" when they heard this. So, for the length of a long summer, Una she milked away

and sung away; while Rody the Bachelor was saying little, thinking much, and getting less light-hearted day by day—till at length it was as clear as the Hill o' Howth, that *an cailin' deas cruite na m-bo* was singing away the heart out of him. So it didn't by no means come like a thunder-clap when the news went round that Rody had discovered cows wouldn't give milk to any one but Una, since she had *made* on them so, and that he decided he'd have to either marry her, or lose the good and good-will of his cows. And Rody boldly said he respected his cows too much to let the matter of a wife stand in the way of their well-doin', more especially when it was such a rare damsel as Una that he was compelled to take. He was in love sure enough!

So, married himself and Una were and had a mortal great wedding entirely, at which poor Rody had to stand his own share of sconcin' about his sudden change, him that was so sore against all womankind. He said there never was no rule since the world begun that hadn't an exception. And that Una was the one exception in the world to the doctrine he used to lay down.

Father Pat he was one of them that used to have the greatest passages with Rody about not marrying; and he was now helping as hard as

he could the neighbours to salt him for his sudden change.

“And is it that you believe,” says Father Pat, “that Una will go as far as you used to think a woman should before she would be worth taking—that she likes and will like you better nor you do yourself?”

“My Una,” says Rody, “certainly goes that far. That’s why I consented to take her.” For he was losin’ his head entirely with the downright love of her.

“Whew-ew-ew!” says Father Pat, that way.

“Father Pat,” says Rody, “ye may whistle or do as you please, but it’s so.” And it was just pitiable to see the poor fellow’s earnestness.

Father Pat looked hard at Rody for a minute to see was he really so far gone entirely. And, “Rody,” says he, “do you really believe it?”

“May I never eat the bread of corn, if I’m not certain of what I say,” says Rody.

“You’re a deal a foolisher man than I thought you,” says Father Pat. “Would you mind wagering me that you will be of the same opinion this day twelvemonth?”

“I’ll wager you,” says Rody, “my spotted springin’-cow agin’ your old grey mare—and



that's long odds—that my opinion isn't altered this day twelvemonth."

"Done," says Father Pat. "And yous, boys, are all witness of this."

Rody promised Father Pat faithfully to keep the transaction a dead secret from Una. And so he did. Rody was in the height of good humour over it, for he was so childishly certain of Una's love for him, and so positive, too, that 'twould last as it was, not for one twelvemonth, or fifteen—but for fifty-five twelvemonths, if Providence would only spare them that long.

And sure enough, the second month they were married Una certainly seemed fonder of Rody than she was the first; and the month after she was fonder of him than the other two put together. And so it went on, month by month, Una, to all appearance, getting fonder of Rody, and Rody prouder of Una every day the sun rose. And every time Rody would meet Father Pat, he would have a hearty laugh at the priest; and "Father Pat," he would say, "I hope you are giving my grey mare all the attention you should." "Och, never mind—never mind, Rody," Father Pat would answer, "the year isn't up yet. It is yourself had better take care of my spotted springer. Mind, I'm warning you." But, Och!

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Rody would break his heart laughing at his reverence's foolishness.

Well, the twelvemonth seemed long passing to Rody till he'd humiliate Father Pat. But the longest of times will pass some time, and the longest of stories will some time have an end. And Rody's year, too, wore round at long last till it come to the last day of it. And on that very evening Rody met Father Pat at a neighbour's funeral.

"Well?" says Rody.

"Well?" says Father Pat.

"What time will I be sending a *garsun* over for the mare, the morra?" says Rody.

"Ah-ha," says the priest, "I see it's always 'too sure, too loose,' with you, Rody. It isn't twelve o'clock the morra yet."

"Lord look to your wit, your reverence!" says Rody. "You're the drowning man catching at a very poor straw."

"Rody M'Ginn," says Father Pat, "there was a gentleman kilt another man in anger some days ago—kilt him dead; and that gentleman is now under sentence of death—to be hanged outside Dublin Gaol the morra mornin', at breakfast time."

"Well?" says Rody.

"Well," says the priest, "this is a great gentleman entirely, and he has advertised all over the country that he'll give five hundred pound to any man who'll act as substitute for him, and get hung in his place."

"Well?" says Rody.

"Very well," says Father Pat, "we're now going to put Una to the real test, whether or not she likes you better nor you like yourself. You're to propose to get hung in this gentleman's place, so as to get the five hundred pound for Una—and then, we'll see what we'll see."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Rody, "ye poor foolish Father Pat, ye!—No, nor if it was fifty times five hundred she would get by it, Una wouldn't listen for an instant to such a proposal."

"Never mind—never mind," says Father Pat, says he, smiling such a confident smile as vexed Rody out and out—"Never mind," says he, "you do as you're bid, and we'll see what we'll see."

"I'll make the purposal," says Rody, "and your reverence will be responsible if Una faints or dies of heart-disease."

"I'll be responsible," says Father Pat, says he, laughing, "if Una faints or dies of heart-disease; and I'll put over her a monument higher nor the church-steeple, and inscribe it—'Here lies the

strangest woman ever lived—a woman who loved her man better nor he loved himself.’ ”

That night as Rody and Una sat across the fire after their supper, Rody smoking, and Una sewing a patch on an old coat of his, Rody says:

“Una, there’s a gentleman to be hung the morra morning for killing another.”

“Poor divil!” says Una, “may the Lord have mercy on him!”

“And he’s advertised that he’ll give five hundred pound to any man that offers to get hung in his stead,” says Rody.

“Lord look to his wit! the poor *amadan* (fool),” Una says. “Doesn’t he know in his heart, if he has a particle of sense at all, at all, that he’ll get no such fool in all Ireland as will offer to do the likes of that, if he was given all the world for a farm-steadin’, and Coraveigh for a kitchen-garden.”

“Una,” says Rody, “I’ve been thinking that five hundred pound would make a mighty nice windfall for you.” And Rody was ready for the spring, if he saw any signs of Una going to drop.

“A mighty nice windfall indeed,” says Una with a smile, “but how could the likes o’ me come by it?”

"If," says Rody, breaking it gently still, "I give myself to be hung in his place."

Una dropped the needle from her fingers, and sat up with a start.

"What!" says she.

It was going to be the divil's own sore trial upon poor Una's nerves; but Rody had to go through it.

"Una," says he, "five hundred pound would mean so much to you, that I've been thinking what a mortal nice present it would be to make to ye; and consequently I'm going to offer myself to be hung in the gentleman's place."

"Arrah," says Una, getting up and throwing her arms round his neck. "Arrah, Rody, Rody! me own darling Rody! it's the jewel of a man ye are! I loved ye with all the veins o' my heart before; but now I love you ten times more, Rody," she says, "have ye sent in your offer yet?"

Rody said: "No."

"Then, Rody, pulse o' me heart," says she, "get inside your coat, and under your hat, and don't let grass grow round your heels till you're at the gaol. Here you are," says she, lifting his coat and hat from their pegs and shoving them on him.

"Una, Una!" says Rody, and the poor fellow near crying: "Una," says he, "it's dark and it's



“‘I’ve been thinking,’ says Rody, ‘as I came back—thinking that, after all, I’m afraid I can’t get hung the morra.’”—Page 159.



damp, and 'twill maybe be time enough to give in me offer be the morning."

"Time enough!" says she, shoving him gently out o' the door. "Time enough lost the scon (pancake). If you waited till morning some other will have the foreway of you. God bless you now!" says she, "and run as if the divil was after you."

When Rody got back she had a fine warm supper for him. "And you must go to your bed as soon as ye eat it, Rody," says she, "so that ye'll be spry and fit to rise in good time. It would be a dawny poor thing entirely if I was to lose me five hundred pound by your indulgin' in a few minutes too long sleep in the morning."

"I've been thinking," says Rody, "as I come back—thinking that, after all, I'm afraid I can't get hung the morra."

"For why, Rody M'Ginn?" says Una, throwin' up her hands.

"Just," says Rody, "because I haven't such a thing as a linen shirt. And I wouldn't take all the land you could see from the top of Carnaween and go before the audience that 'ill be gathered there from far and near, and get hung in an old woollen shirt like this. None of my family was ever hung in a woollen shirt, and it'll not be up-



cast to me that I was the first to put disgrace on them.”

Una waited to say never a word; she only threw the shawl about her head and ran out. She was back in short time and flung a fine, white linen shirt upon the table.

“Rody,” says she, “never fear me—I love ye too well to see you bested.”

“For the sake o’ Heaven,” says he, “Una, where did you get that?”

“On the priest’s hedge,” says she, “it’s a case of needcessity, and the divil a sin it is, even if he is the priest, Rody,” says she; “trust me to stand or fall for you, Rody darlin’.”

Poor Rody shook his head sadly. But another bright thought struck him.

“I’m remembering now,” says he, “I owe twelve and sixpence to Tom Hogan, and ’twould ill become me to go out of the world with that on me soul.”

“Borrow it off one of the neighbours and pay him,” says Una.

“Peuts, woman!” says Rody, “ye might as well climb a crab-tree to gather wall-flowers. The neighbours hasn’t a penny.”

“Wait a bit,” says Una, and out she dashed again with the shawl on her shoulders, and was

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back in small time. And from under her shawl, when she come back, she produced a box and tumbled its contents, which was coppers, on the table and counted them.

“The Lord’s good to us,” says she, then—  
“There’s thirteen shillings and three ha’pence in it.”

Rody caught up the empty box, which she had cast into the fire, and looked at it. It was the poor box from the altar steps!

Poor Rody shook his head again, and went off with him to his cold bed.

But he said till himself: “Una will repent yet, when she thinks of herself.”

And if he went to bed itself, ’tis little he slept. And ’tis still less he’d get leave to sleep in the morning; for from before the screek o’ day, me brave Una was dinning into his ear, that it was time to get up, or he’d be late, and lose to her, her five hundred pound.

“Una,” says he, when he got up and dressed himself, and sat down—“Una, I’ve been thinking.”

“What have ye been thinking, now?” says she.

“I have been thinking,” says he, “that if I’d only not be in too big haste, and not mind getting hung this time, maybe there would be another

gentleman getting hung before long, who would offer a thousand pound for a substitute."

"Them that breakfasts on hopes will often go to bed hungry," says Una, "and a bird in the hand is worth thirteen in the hedge," says she. "Hurry yourself up!"

"And moreover," says Rody, says he, "there's another great debar. If I go, there will be divil a soul to do a hand's turn about the house or the farm, and all will go to the dogs."

"Rody, darlin'," says she, "if that's all ails you, make your mind easy. A winsome young widow (though it is myself says it), with five hundred pound of dry money, not to mention at all, at all, the farm and farmstock, wouldn't go long till she gets a brand new man."

"Och-och! och, och, och!" says poor Rody, says he, broken-hearted entirely.

And at this very point who should lift the latch and walk in, but Father Pat himself.

"Eh? Eh?" says he, "what are ye och-oching about, Rody?"

"Your Reverence," says Rody, says he, "please step out here with me, till I loose ye out your spotted springer."

## XI

### THE KING'S CURING

**T**HERE was a King in Connaught once named Dermod: and, more by the same token, a purty foolish King he was in his early days. For he come to the throne young, and fetched there a long sight less wit than a discreet young man of his age and family should. He was weak-minded; and the clan of designin' people who pitch-forked him on the throne, thought they should have all use of him. They were as covetious as the *mooly* cow, who loves the thistles in the neighbour-fields better nor the clover in her own. The chief of these lads was a chap named Conal, as deep as a tailyer's thimble. He always had the ear of Dermod and kept Dermod and Connaught for ever at war, north, south, aist, or west; and no matter how the war went, Conal and his clan, who were born moroders, managed to come out of it nothin' the poorer anyway.

There was a time Dermod was heading his

army on one of these moroding expeditions into Leinster, and he whanged the King of Leinster, marching into his own palace a conqueror. But if he did, the tide of war changed soon and suddent; for the minute Dermod met the King of Leinster's daughter, Criona, it was himself that was conquered—and he knew it, poor fellow. And this was the salvation of him.

Criona, she was known and noted through the length and brea'th of Ireland, not for her beauty alone—though, in troth, you'd fare far and ford a deal of fords ere you'd meet her bate for that—but far more for her wit and her wisdom. Now, Dermod, to give the divil his dues, was nowise an ill-lookin' man; and he had a good heart and kindly as e'er another in Ireland. Any ill or unkindliness that was in it was there only by raison his counsellors put it there. Criona she seen his good qualities in short time; and seen, too, that if he hadn't enough mind of his own for a King, he only needed a good adviser at his elbow and he'd be better nor the average King anyway. She give consent to have him, and back with him went to Connaught.

This was the first time Dermod ever differed with Conal and his ill counsellors; they riz an uproar when they found he fell in love with

Criona; and they threatened all sorts if he wouldn't leave her where he found her and come single again to his own country. For they well knew the wise and strong-minded woman she was; and knew that if they let Dermod get into her clutches, as they put it, small influence they'd ever have over him after. But Dermod, poor fellow, was so desperate in love that for the first time in his life he dared to defy Conal and his clan.

When, in spite of them, he married Criona, it's downcast creatures they were, and mournful, draggle-tailed warriors who trooped back after the weddin'-party to Connaught; and through the length and brea'th of that province they spread themselves, croakin' that both Dermod and Connaught were now done for; there'd be no more wars and no more spoils, and the young men would be turned into old women—as the prophecies had foretold. They seen well that Queen Criona looked through them, and witnessed the thoughts in their hearts, and found they'd been influencin' weak-minded Dermod for bad; and that she'd have small *failte* (welcome) for them coming about Dermod or his castle any more. So they dispersed themselves every man to his own home—and sucked their thumbs there.

Right enough, there came big changes on Con-

naught; Criona took Dermot in hands and showed him the beauty of peace and Christian forbearance. He loved her truly from the first; and it's deeper and deeper he fell in love with her every day after, so that, if she'd tell him it was for his good (or hers) or for the good of Connaught, he'd put his foot in the fire and hold it there till it burned to the stump. Consequently, for the first time in ages, Connaught ceased goin' to war, and begun growin' peaceful and prosperous and happy. The land thrived and flourished as it never done afore in the memory of man; and people said that the clever Criona had brought them God's blessing. All quarters and corners of the country envied the kingdom of Connaught, for that it had such a clever woman at the head of it; and the l'arned, and the wise, and the witty used to resort to the castle of King Dermot from all arts and parts of Ireland, on purpose to make the acquaintance of the wittiest Queen any province ever knew, and the remarkablest all round—for she could outdo at their own games all the scholars, and doctors, and wits of Erin. And, as well you may suppose, it was Dermot was the proud man of her. He'd never pass a law, or walk a step, without first consulting Criona, and having her advice upon it. So clever was this

woman, too, that while managin' to make him do all things she wanted, she conthived in such a way as humoured him, poor fellow, into the belief he was doin' only what he himself wanted. And he believed he was grown a mighty wise King—the wisest in all Ireland. Sartain proof of it was that the wisest woman, whom all the world acknowledged, in all Ireland said, "That's good," to everything he done. Purty soon he began to grow vain of himself. "Criona," he'd say, "all the world must give in that myself and yourself are the wisest King and Queen history ever heerd tell of."

"There's sorra doubt of it," Criona, she'd say, without ever crackin' a smile.

At long and at last, King Dermod he got so vain of what he now believed to be entirely his own wisdom, that Conal and his colleagues, who, though they kept quiet and far from the Coort all this time, still owed Criona a deadly spite, and still longed to get hold of King Dermod again and be back at their thievin', their murderin's and morodin's—Conal and his colleagues they come to the Coort in ones and pairs, making pretence to Criona to have turned wise and peaceful and great admirers of hers—and insinuated themselves again around Dermod by flattery. For, now they



seen his weak spot, they made the most of it. They never tired tellin' him that his like for wisdom, for statesmanship, and for kingcraft was never before known, not in Ireland alone, but in the whole world—and that there would be a good many moons in the sky, and three in the du'ghill, afore his equal would be seen again. Dermod soon got back all his old liking for Conal, who, he now thought, was a fine fellow entirely. And when Conal had him well worked up he said to Dermod there was only one small thing standin' in the way of his fame, as the wisest of Princes, goin' down to all time.

“And what's that?” sez King Dermod, sez he.

When Conal told that as all great men had enemies, so he had some, too, scattered here and there, who envied him beca'se of his greatness, and who went up and down the country trying to rob him of all credit for his wisdom, “By what manes?” Dermod wanted to know. Conal told that the means they took was givin' it out that all his wisdom was only his wife's; that he didn't know how to twiddle his thumbs unless she showed him, and daren't do it without her consent, even if he knew. “Innocent people,” sez Conal, sez he, “are beginnin' to believe these liars, and to think you are raily tied to your wife's

apron-strings. And everybody who knows you, and knows your wonderful wisdom, is heartily sorry that such things is gettin' out; and they're sayin' that it's your due to show up these liars for what they are."

"How am I to do that?" sez King Dermod.

And Conal told him the surest way of doing it was to begin scornin' his wife's word once in a while; gradially breakin' both her and the world into the knowledge that it was him was the head of wisdom, and not her. Dermod, he studied on this; and he said to himself it was a wise advice surely; and he'd act on it—for 'twas a pity Criona 'ud be gettin' credit for his greatness.

As good luck would have it, there was to be, just a week after, a great fair at Farney, twenty mile from the King's castle. All sorts of articles and animals that ever was noted or known were annially brought to this fair for to be throgged or sold; and the young men and old of all the country for a hundred miles round used to gather to it; some of them for business, but more of them just for divilment and divarsion. It lasted three days and three nights, and was a great time for carousin' and for contestin' at all kinds of feats and games. Dermod never missed this fair for once in all his life till he got married. In the

ten years since then he never stood in it, by reason Criona had advised him it was a properer thing for a married man, and a King, to keep far from it.

Here, now, was the grandest of chances to show his wife and the world that he was a man who had a mind of his own, so he made up his mind to enjoy the Fair of Farney.

Always, since he married, he'd never gone a cat's-call from home without asking Criona whether he should or no. Now, on the night afore the day for settin' out for Farney, he took the opportunity, when Conal and his colleagues and all his Coort were listenin', to say to his wife in a mighty off-hand way: "Criona, darlin', I'd like you to give me an early call in the mornin'."

"For why?" sez Criona, sez she. "Is it that you're expecting the arrival of them l'arn'd scholars that are on their way here from Meath?"

"I'm not," sez Dermod, sez he, "expectin' the arrival of them l'arn'd scholars from Meath. And if they come the morrow they'll have to take their time and cool their heels for four days or more, till I get back to discourse them upon their l'arn'd subjects at my leisure."

"Back from where?" sez Criona, sez she.

"Back from the Fair at Farney," sez Dermod,

sez he, as cool as a trout in a pool—to the consternation of the Coort, who all looked at Criona.

But Criona, wise woman that she was, never showed a shadow on her face; she said, “Dermod, my dear, the Fair of Farney may be all right for reckless youths, but it’s not the place I should like to see a King, and the father of a family, and a wise man like you, going to.”

“But, Criona,” sez he, still as cool as ever, “you see, it’s not what you like, but what I like, that’s got to be done in this kingdom—if I’m King. If I haven’t enough sense,” sez he, “to carry me to the Fair of Farney and back again, without making myself ridiculous, it’s tied to your apron-strings I should be—instead of being, as I am, the wisest, and most knowledgable, and far-famedest King that Ireland has known since the days of Adam.” Sez he, “I have been so lazy for ten years back that I neglected entirely the Fair of Farney. For the time to come I intend, with Heaven’s help, never to miss it. Conal,” sez he, “would you order the neatest and smartest small pony in my stable to be saddled for me? Put on it a white bridle—as sign that it’s for sale I have it. I went about so little lately, since I got lazy, that there’ll be few in the fair’ll know me as King Dermod. They’ll think I’m an old

fellow come from the country to dispose of his pony.”

The Coort was consternated more and more—dumbfounded entirely. Criona, wise woman that she was, saw in a jiffy how the wind sat; for, more by the same token, she was not till now without having her suspicions of the mischief Conal and his colleagues were up to. But she just bowed her head and turned the talk to another subject.

And, in troth, to tell the truth, Dermod was delighted withinside himself that she took it so; for, for all the bold face he put on, he was trimblin’ lest she’d put down her foot and say “No!”

There was a faithful fellow at the Coort—a Leinsterman who had been sarvant to her father, and who she’d fetched with her from home. Afore she went to bed that night she had a five minutes’ confab with him; and when she had finished the talk she put some goold in his fist and warned him to be mum.

When they were retirin’ that night Dermod was still tremblin’ withinside himself, but he thought it was due from him to Criona to mollify her a bit; so he said, “Criona, darlin’, you know I have now come to the time of day to have sense—if I’ll ever have any. And it would be too bad

for you for to expect that I'm too foolish to be trusted to go by myself, of my own accord, to the Fair of Farney."

"True for you," sez Criona, sez she, chiming in with him. "You surely have come to the time of day to have sense now. It's what I've just been thinking to myself," sez she, "that, for the time to come, you should be guidin' both yourself and me—instead of me pretending, as I have done, to be taking it on myself to guide both of us."

Faith, Dermod was relieved and happy to find how she took it. He told her that she might trust him from this time on to guide the pair of them, and guide Connaught as well. And he'd begin now, this night, to take no more advice from her.

"Dermod," she said, "I'm proud to see you showing such a fine spirit. From now, begin," sez she. "By your own advice, and of your own free will, go to the Fair of Farney the morrow as the first step; and I have no doubt you'll very soon prove to me you have enough wisdom not alone to guide yourself and me and Connaught—but the whole world."

"Thank you, Criona," sez he; "from my heart I thank you. And I want you to believe that you'll never have reason to be vexed for puttin' yourself under my guidance from this night on."

Well and good; in the mornin' King Dermod was early astir and had a hearty breakfast; and when he went out into the courtyard Conal was there, holding a beautiful little pony, saddled, and with a white bridle on it, to pretend it was for sale; and, when Dermod put his leg over it, Conal give him a hearty thump on the back, sayin', "Bowld fellow, King Dermod," sez he, "it's me-self was proud of you last night; you'll very soon now show the worl' who is master at the Coort of King Dermod." And King Dermod he smiled very proud, and he rode out of the gate.

As he was throttin' over the drawbridge fornenst the castle, Queen Criona threw open her window and called to him, and he stopped.

"Dermod," sez she, "what in the world tempts you for to make such a fool of yourself as saddle an ass and ride it to Farney?"

Dermod, he looked at the pony and then looked up at Criona, and sez he, "Criona, my dear, is it that you have taken laive of your senses? Don't you see that I'm ridin' the finest little pony my stables can show?"

Criona, she laughed hearty at this, and said he was fond of his joke in the mornin'. "Nevertheless," sez she, "it's a joke unbecomin' a King, for to ride to Farney on an ass; and that you'll

soon find if anyone discovers you to be King Dermod."

He got as mad as a March hare with her, and said to her something that wasn't in his prayers; and he spurred his pony out over the drawbridge and away with him.

Now Dermod wasn't gone three mile of the way, and his anger wasn't simmered down—though it was nearly so—when he overtuk a gay lad steppin' out, with a stick in his hand, and facin' for the fair likewise. "Good morra," sez King Dermod, sez he, as he trotted past.

"Good morra; and good luck to the pair of ye," says the lad.

"It's a far thramp you'll have afoot," sez Dermod, sez he, "if you're for the fair."

"It's my own fault that I come afoot," sez the lad, sez he, "for, like you, I had an ass at home; but, unlike you, I'd be ashamed for to be seen ridin' an ass into Farney."

Dermod, he turned the head of his pony round, and he made a dash at the lad, and a slash at him with his whip; and well it was for the fellow he was light o' foot and fit to clear the ditch like a hare, else Dermod 'uld have massacraid him.

The King faced his pony for Farney again and rode on, and in little sweet humour he was. As



he'd rode over the drawbridge he thought he'd left behind him in the castle, in his wife, the one fool the world knew this morning. But here was as great and as provokin' a fool. He put spurs to his pony and he rode terrible hard, tryin' for to ride the madness off himself, and never stopped nor stayed till he had gone another three mile; and there a big *bodach* of a farmin'-lookin' fellow crossin' the fields, and dressed for the fair too, halloaed to him to stop.

King Dermod pulled up, wondering what this *bodach* wanted with him, and "What's the matter with ye?" sez he to the *bodach*.

"Old buck," sez the *bodach*, sez he, "light down till I have a look at that ass you've for sale. How much'll ye be after wantin' for him?"

And the King that instant was dumbfounded, not knowin' what answer to make, or whether it was in his right wits, or out of them, he was. Without replyin' to the *bodach* one word, good, bad, or indifferent, he put spurs to the pony and away with him like the wind, for shame's sake.

"Either all Ireland," sez he to himself, "is gone mad entirely this mornin', or else I'm the sorriest fool that flounders on the ridge of the world.

"By this and by that," at last, sez he, "the next man I meet I'll let him decide atween me and the

animal I'm ridin'. I'll bestow it to him," sez he, "if it's makin' a laughin' stock o' myself bestridin' an ass I am—and Heaven help Conal, too."

Faith, he hadn't gone a mile more when he overtuk a dandy chap footin' it for the fair. King Dermod he noticed that this chap, like the other two lads, didn't know him for the King. He slowed up when he came into company with this third, and, sez he, "It's a brave mornin' this, glory be to Goodness."

"It is, thank Heaven, yes," sez the other, sez he; "is it for the fair you're pushin'?"

"For the fair, yes," sez King Dermod, sez he, and he patted his pony. "I'm taking this little horse there to sell it." And he turned the tail of his eye at the same time on the lad he was chatting to, to see how he'd take this. The lad gave a snigger.

"What are ye sniggerin' at?" sez King Dermod, sez he.

"At me own fun," sez the lad, sez he, dryly, that way.

"And what's the fun?" sez King Dermod.

And the lad turns on the King purty mad, and sez he, "For three fardens I'd crack your ribs, ye oul' fool, ye," sez he, "with this stick."

“For why?” sez King Dermod, astonished.

“For hintin’ to me,” sez the lad, sez he, “that I never left my mother afore, and wouldn’t know an ass from a horse.”

King Dermod jumped out of his saddle that minute. “I humbly beg your ten thousand pardons,” sez he, “and I didn’t mean for to insult you. It was all a mistake, and I want ye to take this ass a present from me for the insult.” He pitched the reins on the lad’s arm, and, “No Fair of Farney,” sez he, “for ould fools like me. Good mornin’ to you, and good luck.” And he was footin’ it for home afore you could say “Scat!”

When he reached the castle he first went like a madman after Conal, who, I tell you, didn’t wait to chop logic with him, but cleared the walls like a wild deer afore the ragin’ tiger that come after him, and never stopped runnin’ till he put three parts of Ireland behind him. Then Dermod went stavin’ up the stairs, out of one room into another, till he found Criona sittin’ sewin’ with her maidens.

“Why, my own Dermod!” sez Criona, sez she. “Surely it isn’t back from the fair you are so soon? What have you done with the ass?”

“Criona,” sez he, “I made it a present to a man I met on the way.”

"For why, Dermod?" sez she—and she tryin' to keep her face straight.

"Because," sez he, "the castle of Connaught can only afford to keep one ass—and I thought it better the biggest of the pair should come back."

"Dermod," sez she, "how do you mean?"

"I mane," sez Dermod, sez he, "that, though the one I parted with was an ass, right enough, he had the sense enough to know it; but meself was too big an ass to know I was one. Criona," sez he, "you're the wisest and cleverest woman in all creation, and you've got for a man the stupidest fool that ever walked. Promise me," sez he, "that you'll never let me make myself ridiculous in the face of the country, by either liftin' hand or foot, givin' word, order, diraction, or comand, ever again, without first havin' your advice on it."

Well, Criona, she promised him. And, by consequence, King Dermod was a happy man, who listened to his wife's advice and did his wife's will, and ruled with great credit to himself over a peaceful and prosperous kingdom of Connaught from then till the day he died.

And Dermod, he left a great name after him, entirely.

## XII

### LORD THORNY'S ELDEST SON

**T**HERE was a blacksmith, once on a time, in Donegal, named Thorny, and because he was a humpy little fellow, and very consequential, the neighbours nicknamed him Lordy, and oftentimes called him Lord Thorny; and he had one son named Dick, who grew up to be an idle fellow, every bit as consequential as his father; but he was a handsome lad and a bit of a dandy, and the idol of all the girls in Donegal.

This Dick lounged about doing nothing, with his hands in his pockets, his Sunday clothes never off him, and his hair combed and licked into all kinds o' style. 'Tis many the fair match he could have got amongst the girls of Donegal, but he was ambitious. He said he was equal to any lady in the land, and that he would take never a wife but a lady who could afford to keep him.

His father, seeing he was no earthly good to him, would very well like to see him marry a warm farmer's daughter, and settle; but every

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time ever his father spoke to him this way, my brave Dick only turned up his nose; and at long last his father got so heart sick, sore and tired of him that he banished him from about his place altogether, and ordered him to go off, and take the world for his pillow.

Well, my brave Dick started, and headed for Dublin as being the greatest and grandest place in the worl'. It is often he had heard of Dublin, and often and often he had wished to be in it. So now, when he set his feet going, he never called a halt until he was there. Small money he had in his pocket, so he took lodgings in a poor, back street, and washed and dressed himself up in his dandiest, and went walking through the grandest parts of Dublin, admiring the grand houses, but admiring more the still grander ladies. There was one young lady that he saw, who was far winsomer than any of the others, and he turned, and followed her from street to street, till he saw her go into her own house, a very fine and grand house entirely, and he then knew that she and her people must be mortal wealthy.

He knocked on a neighbour's door, and, pointing out this house, inquired who lived there, and who might the young lady be that he saw going into it just now. The neighbour told him that

'twas the house of the Lord High Mayor of Dublin, and that the young lady who had gone into it was the Lord High Mayor's only daughter, the most beautiful in Dublin, or, maybe, in all Ireland, and one of the richest, too; for she would inherit all her father's wealth, and he, being Lord High Mayor, was, of course, the wealthiest man in Ireland. Then Dick went away, thinking that this was the young lady for him. "I will court her," he thought, "and make her my wife or know the reason why."

He went off with himself to his home in the back streets, and went to his bed, but, didn't sleep much—for he tossed about, ruminating and planning all night. In the morning he was up bright and early, and had his breakfast, and started out lookin' for a drapery-shop. He asked for a dozen of their nicest silk handkerchiefs, and paid for these, though there was little more left in his pocket. And then he set off in the direction of the street where the Lord High Mayor lived. He was dressed in his dandiest, and when he came there, he went marching up and down that street, past the Lord Mayor's house, and he watchin' all the time, with the tail of his eye, to see if she was coming to the window to look out at him.

Sure enough, attracted by the sight of a hand-

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some young stranger in Dublin, who was walking up and down the street, taking the air, as it seemed to her, she came to the window to look out. Now, he put his hand in his pocket, and took out one of the silk handkerchiefs, wiped his nose with it, and then threw it carelessly over his shoulder; and every time he passed the window he would pull out another handkerchief, wipe his nose, and immediately throw it away.

She called her servant-maid, and, pointing out the lad to her, said: "This must be a wonderful rich young man entirely; for, though he carries the best silk handkerchiefs, he never uses any of them a second time, only throws them over his shoulder as if they were bits of paper."

And more by the same token there was a crowd of the young street-runners of Dublin at Dick's heels, grabbing at the handkerchiefs, and scuffling and fighting for them, according as he discarded them. Then the Lord High Mayor's daughter sent her servant out, and told her, as he seemed to be a stranger, to ask him would he not come into the Lord High Mayor's house and rest himself, and have a chat with the Lord High Mayor's daughter.

When Dick got the message, as you may well suppose, he was delighted in the heart of him,



but, instead of letting the servant-maid see this, he only asked her: "Are you sure that the Lord High Mayor is wealthy enough and respectable enough for a gentleman of my standing and respectability to go in and make his acquaintance, and the acquaintance of his daughter, and sit down and rest in their house?"

And the servant assured him that the Lord High Mayor was the wealthiest and most respectable and best come-up gentleman in Ireland, and his daughter the most beautiful in it.

"Then," says Dick, says he, "I suppose I may go in and sit down for a little while without any loss to my dignity."

In with the servant-maid he went, and the servant-maid told her mistress all that had passed. The mistress she was astonished, and, when she came into the grand receiving-room where Dick was lounging on a sofa of silks and satins, with his feet on another silk sofa, she was quite backward in such a great man's presence.

And Dick, seeing this, shook hands with her right heartily, and told her to make herself at home, and be no way shy in his presence, for he always made it a rule to accommodate himself to any sort of company he happened to fall in with, even the most humble. She thanked him,

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and tried to make herself as much at home as she could, and Dick began putting all sorts of questions to her, and, when he had questioned her to his heart's content, says he: "Of course, you know who I am?"

"Well, indeed," says she, and she blushed for shame, "I am sorry to say that I do not."

"Oh, then," says he, "you will know when I tell you. I am Lord Thorny's eldest son and heir, and, of course, you have often heard of my father."

She blushed again twice as much as she blushed before, and she said she was very young and not very long home from a convent school where they did not know or hear tell much of the great people of the world, and she asked that she might be excused on that ground.

"Ah," he says, "surely, surely, you will be excused on that ground, and don't apologize, I beg of you. And, furthermore, I beg you will not be a bit more uneasy, now you know the great man I am."

But, for all that, she was double and treble as uneasy, and she was glad when her father came into the room. She introduced her father to him, and she said to him that this was the eldest son and heir of the great Lord Thorny.

And her father, who always wanted to pretend to know every famous and great personage, said this was a great honour the gentleman had done him in coming into his house to rest himself, and he begged that, if he remained in Dublin, he would come often.

Dick answered that he thought them exceedingly good and kindly-hearted people, and very decent indeed for their station in life, and that he would have a pleasure in dropping in any time he felt that way inclined. "And, by the way," says he, getting on his feet, and putting his hand in his pocket, "by the way, I find that I have left my purse at home on my bedroom-table in the hotel, and, as I never like to leave a house without a small acknowledgment to the servants, I will thank you to lend me a hundred pounds till I come again."

The Lord Mayor thanked him for the honour he did him in borrowing money from him. He put his hand in his pocket, and took out one hundred pounds, and gave it to Dick, and Dick asked would he kindly send in the servants, and the Lord High Mayor went to the kitchen, and told the four servants to wipe their faces and come to the parlour, for there was a great gentleman there waiting to see them. They did as they were bid,

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and, when they went into the parlour, Dick handed them a five-pound note each. And then he bade good-by to the Lord High Mayor's daughter, and went away.

And, when he was gone, the Lord High Mayor and his daughter could do nothing for wondering at the wonderfully wealthy man Dick was, and the Lord High Mayor advised his daughter to set her cap for him; and from then she did nothing but titivate herself for the next time he was to come.

And indeed it was not long until he came again, and he gave a five-pound note to the servant-girl who opened the door to him. He had a long chat with the daughter, and she was making herself very agreeable entirely, and not a bit less agreeable did Dick make himself, but before he left that evening he told her he would like to do her father the honour of borrowing another couple of hundred pounds from him, for he said he forgot his purse again, and was that stupid that he would forget his head if it was not well stuck on his shoulders.

The daughter said the honour was great; and her father made him take five hundred pounds this time, as he said he might want it before he got home. Dick said it was all the same to him,

and he took the five hundred pounds, and made an appointment to come and dine with them next evening. Before he left he gave every one of the servants ten pounds each; and the consternation of the Lord High Mayor and his daughter at the wonderful wealth which Lord Thorny's eldest son must possess, was great indeed.

On the third evening he came he made downright love to the daughter, and before he left he asked her of her father, and got her, and the wedding-day was arranged for, just a week later. And it was agreed that every lord and lady in Dublin would be asked to the wedding, and that they would have the biggest blowout ever seen in Dublin before, or that would ever be seen after.

Very well and good! That fared well, and it did not fare ill, as they say in the stories; and, in the meantime, the courtship went on, and Dick and his intended wife used to go out driving in the Lord High Mayor's coach through the beautiful parks of Dublin. But there was one day, driving, and the coachman, going round a turn in one of the walks, upset the carriage through his own awkwardness, and spilt Dick and his girl into the mud. Dick was so outraged that he lifted his fist, and knocked down the coachman.

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"Well, there is one thing I say," says the coachman, "and that is that you are no gentleman."

Dick only gave him another polthogue at this, knockin' him down again; and then forgot all about it.

But if he did forget it, the Lord High Mayor of Dublin's daughter didn't, for it rankled in her mind, and she wondered why it was that the coachman had told him he was no gentleman. She took an early opportunity of asking the coachman why he said it.

"Because," says the coachman, "he struck me with his fist, whereas if he had been a gentleman, it would have been with the whip he'd have struck me."

One thought borrowed another with her, till at length she begun to have wee doubts on her mind that, after all, Dick might not be what he put up to be, at all, at all. And, what with one thing and another, it is little sleep she got that night, and in the morning she opened her mind on the subject to her father, and asked his advice regarding what was best to be done, and the advice he gave was that a special messenger should be sent down to Donegal, where Dick said his father, Lord Thorny, lived, in order that they

might find whether Lord Thorny was the great man Dick represented him to be.

They employed a trusty man, and, before they sent him off, swore him on the Book that he would bring a true account back with him. And then the messenger set off on a swift horse. And when he was coming near the Donegal country, he begun inquiring if the people knew Lord Thorny, or could they direct him to him, and every one laughed when they heard this inquiry, and they said surely they did know him, for who did not know the Lordy, and they directed him on the right road, though he was still the best part of fifty mile from him.

When at length he reached Donegal town, every one was laughing louder when he inquired for Lord Thorny, and every one was directing him toward the Lordy's; and when he reached him, his surprise, you may be sure, was neither small nor middlin', to see an old tumble-down forge, with no roof at all; and the Lordy himself was at his supper when the messenger went in, for it was now night. His meal was of Indian meal stirabout, and he had it placed upon the anvil, and he himself was sitting upon his heels while he supped it.

The messenger pretended that he was looking

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to get his horse shod, and the Lordy told him to wait until he had finished his supper, and he would shoe it. And he waited along with other men till the Lordy had finished his supper.

And then Lord Thorny washed his hands in a big stone trough that was in the forge, and wiped them on his breeches, and next he drank a big bowl of black tea.

The messenger got his horse shod by excuse, and then set out for Dublin post-haste: for he was ordered on peril of his life to be back there before the wedding. And on the very night before the wedding he came galloping up to the Lord High Mayor's door. Off he jumped, and up and into the room where the Lord High Mayor and his daughter were waiting on him.

And as this servant was one of those whom Dick had been giving five- and ten-pound notes to, and as he had been looking forward to having a grand time of it under such a master, when Dick should marry, in his heart of hearts he would have liked to be able to give a grand report of Dick's father, but he was sworn to the truth, and so, unfortunately, should have to tell fact.

The Lord High Mayor welcomed him, and asked him had he discovered Lord Thorny. He said he had.



“And tell me now,” says the daughter of the Lord High Mayor, “is he as famous and as far known as his son would have us believe?”

Says the messenger: “When I came within fifty miles and more of his place, there wasn’t a child on the road that hadn’t the name o’ Lord Thorny on the tip of his tongue.”

“Well, well, well!” says the Lord High Mayor. “That is great news surely!”

“But tell me,” says the daughter, “what is his castle like?”

“Oh,” says the messenger, “I could hardly describe it, for there’s no castle in Dublin, nor in any place I have ever been, that looks anyways like Lord Thorny’s castle.”

“Indeed, now!” says the daughter. “But tell what was the most wonderful thing you noticed about it?”

Says the servant, “The most wonderful thing that I noticed about it was the roof. I have seen castles in Dublin and outside Dublin, with high and grand roofs, but a roof so high or a roof so grand as that of Lord Thorny’s castle I never in all my born days before beheld. When you stepped into the edifice, and looked up, ye may doubt my word (but remember that I am on my oath) when I tell you that that roof was miles

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and miles high, and miles and miles long, and was covered all over with shining little things that lighted up the castle so no lamps were needed."

Both the Lord High Mayor and his daughter were thunderstruck.

"That," says the messenger, "was wonderful, but there were more wonderful still. The Lord himself was at his supper. He allows no one to sit down with him, but any respectable person that likes can go in and look on. He sat upon a seat that money could not purchase, and ate upon a table that ten men could not lift."

"Well, well, well!" says the Lord High Mayor and his daughter. "And tell us what did he eat?" says the daughter.

"He did not eat any common thing that was raised in this country. His food is grown for him in America, and is brought over to this country in ships," says the messenger, "and I have never seen this dish used at the table of any of the other gentlemen of this land. And after he had eaten this meal, he drank a great goblet of black wine that he had fetched to him from Asia; then he washed his hands in a basin that would take thirty men to lift, and he wiped his hands on a towel that neither you, my Lord High

Mayor, nor the Lord Lieutenant, nor even the King himself ever offered to the most distinguished guest that ever came to visit ye. And the avenue to this edifice was thronged with ladies and gentlemen and horses, going and coming all the day long. In fact, such a lord as Lord Thorny I have never seen, or you have never seen, or any other man in Ireland."

The delight of the Lord High Mayor and his daughter, when they heard this, was past tellin'. And when Dick came dressed for the wedding next morning, he received a welcome ten times greater than any he had received before. And the marriage turned out to be a happy one. Dick very soon learned about the messenger that had been sent to Donegal, and he gave him one hundred pounds for a present on the marriage-day, and became his firm and fast friend afterwards.

Very soon after their marriage Dick gave tidings to his wife that his father had disgraced him by marrying a lady beneath his station, who had only a hundred thousand pound a year, and that in consequence he was going to cut his father, and would not recognize him any longer. And he swore that, though they might travel every foot of ground in Ireland, they would never set their

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feet upon his father's lands or territory, or go within leagues of it.

And he made his wife proud of him, that he had such a spirit, and he always kept his word to the day of his death, which was a long time after, for a long life and a happy one the Lord High Mayor of Dublin's daughter had with Lord Thorny's eldest son.

## XIII

### LONG CROMACHY OF THE CROWS

'**T**IS with Dark Patrick from Donegal, full as much as, or maybe more than, Long Cromachy of the Crows, that this tale concerns itself. But that will rightify itself.

It was why he was called Long Cromachy by reason that he used to be past the or'nary tall— afore the years bent him. It was Crooked Cromachy that he was beginning to go by now, among a share of the people. Long Cromachy had been a quare man all his days—not at all like no other man. He didn't attend the worship of the nation, and never acknowledged no religion; but he lived all his days, lee-alone, in his little cabin, among a thick grove of trees that the light of day could hardly penetrate, by reason of the tops of them being crowded with the nests of a rookery of crows that arrived there the terrible stormy night he was born—from where no man knew—and that never left till the wild

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night that he died. All alone in his little house inunder this rookery lived Cromachy all of his days, supporting himself, as it seemed to the world, by working his little patch of land. But there was many and many's the one would be telling you that it was more by the crows he was supported; and that when they foraged far and near the burden of what they brought home was dropped down Cromachy's chimley to feed him. For three score years no man had ever got into his house, and no man wanted to go, moreover: and no man or his mother could rightly say how he lived or how he done. Neither did any man, or any woman either, care much for making talk on the matter, for his neighbors lived in holy dread of Cromachy and his curse, and even them that had the breadth of Ireland betwixt themselves and him didn't care to mention the man's name above a loud whisper.

For Cromachy was a terror, and his name a name of fear, within the four seas of Ireland by reason that he had the gift of cursing. He had the power of praying a bad prayer upon every man and thing within the bounds of the kingdom; and whatever ill he prophesied for them was as sure to come as summer's long day. And whenever he did curse a man or thing, there was a crow

left the rookery, followed the curse, and stood by that man or thing till their ill-fortune was fulfilled. When a single crow of Cromachy's was seen flying over the land, terror bestruck the heart of every mortal who lifted an eye to it, and that mortal then prayed God, if he never prayed before, that the crow might wing its way past him and his—and when it was safe past he put up a fresh prayer for the unfortunate that it flew to.

At that time Ireland was reigned over by a king called Conall. He had three sons that were to him the apple of his eye, and whom he dreamt big things of. He doted upon these boys, and his heart was within them, and if anything happened to one of them the world well knew that the heart of the King Conall would burst. And it is the sad calamity for the nation that would be, for Conall was just and kind beyond the custom of kings, and a real father to his people who worshipped the ground he walked on, and who never could outlive their grief if calamity overcame their beloved king.

More betoken 'twas small wonder the father should love the lads, for Conall and Donall and Taig (which was their names) were fine brave boys, surely, as boys go. Witless, of course, as youngsters will be, and maybe a bit harum-

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scarum, they were fond, to be sure, of their antics and tricks—as what young fellow will not be who has more to eat than he has to do? But it must be said that the tricks were never mean ones—no worse than would be worked by hot-blooded young fellows whose hearts were light and fancies free, and a deal of the dare-devil running in their veins.

But behold ye! Didn't it unfortunately fall out one night that the devil tempted them to play a trick upon Long Cromachy of the Crows? They went through his rookery, where the foot of man had not been for sixty years, and they hasped the door on the outside, stuffin' the key-hole, and put a flat stone over the mouth of the chimley; and they covered up, likewise, the couple of little panes that were in his house, till it was only by a miracle that the man escaped being smothered and choked by the smoke from the big fire of green wood he was then burning. Cromachy was in a mighty rage, and when he discovered who played the trick upon him—which it didn't take him long to find—he took with him a crow and set out hot-foot, and never stopped or stayed till he was at the King's castle and in the King's hall, just as, after dinner, the three Princes had the court in a roar describing the capital joke, as they



thought it, that they had cracked upon Long Cromachy of the Crows. But you could hear a cockroach cough in that hall the instant Long Cromachy's presence was discovered in the door, with a crow perched upon his shoulder. King Connall, who, like the good, wise King he was, did not enjoy the trick one bit, but was going to reprimand his sons for interfering with the poor old man, he got up in his place and said, "Cromachy, it's welcome you are, and glad I am to see you at my Court, for you have not shown your face here for forty years. Won't you come up," he said, "and take a sait at my right hand?"

"Oh, King," says he, "I'll not go up, and I'll not take any sait at your right hand—nor at your left neither. You haven't seen my face in your hall for forty years afore, and, please the stars," says he, "you'll not see it here for forty years more (if He grants me that long); and it isn't for any festivities I have come now, nor to break bread with you nor yours; but I have come to curse!"

At that there went up from all there a yell like the end of the world, and the cry from the King's heart was louder and painfuller than the cries of all the others together.

"Cromachy! Cromachy!" says he, "anything,

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anything but that. For pity's sake," says he, "and our country's sake, for sake of me and of my children, spare, this time, three reckless, thoughtless boys, and don't cast your curse on them. I'll do anything that's in my power and give you anything in my possession that you crave for, if only you spare my boys."

"King Conall," says Cromachy, says he, "I have come to curse and curse I will, though you offer me the earth for a kitchen garden and the moon for a manure heap. No King's son'll ever boast that he got the better of Cromachy of the Crows. In the name of the Powers of Darkness," says he, "I curse your children, Conall, Donall and Taig. I curse Conall that he may become a murderer, and by murder live all his days. I curse Donall that he may turn robber, and by robbery ever live; and Taig, that he may become a beggar, and in beggary live and die. Now go," says he to the black crow upon his shoulder, "and sit by the King's chair until my curse is fulfilled for his children. Good-bye, King Conall," says he; "good-bye to yourself and your children; and though you may never see my face in your hall more, neither one of ye will be likely to forget Long Cromachy of the Crows."

And then he was gone. Sad and sore was the

grief that fell upon King Conall, and they thought the shock would have killed him. Bad and bad his courtiers took the curse; and worse, as you may well suppose, was it taken by Conall's three sons. But worse still than all of them put together was the grief of the King for the awful blight to be upon the children of his heart that he had hoped such high things for, and who were now doomed to be murderer, thief, and beggar. Awful was the sorrow of the King and terrible the grief o' the kingdom. And nothing, the people thought, in the books of the histories, and little in the stories of the Shanachies, ever equalled or could equal the calamity that had fallen upon their country. From the time Cromachy called down the curse the King did no good; he took to his bed and was attended day and night by the Court doctors and the best doctors of the land, who, however, shook their heads, for they knew well—that he tried to impress upon them himself—that it was beyond medical skill to heal his wound.

The King sent for his wise men and consulted them and asked to know if they could discover any way out of the terrible business. But in face of Cromachy's curse, his wise men were wise no longer, and not the wisest of them offered one

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word of advice that was worth the paper you would write it on. And it was advertised all over the kingdom of Ireland, and all over England, Scotland, and France likewise, the calamity that had come upon King Conall, and the sore need there was for some extraordinary wise man to appear at King Conall's Court who could give the broken-hearted King consolation in his affliction. And an enormous reward was offered to the lucky man who could discover a way of circumventing the curse of Cromachy. And it is many is the wise one who travelled from near and from afar, from home and abroad, from east and from west, to King Conall's Court to lay down his plans for escaping the curse. But 'twas all vain. The curse of Cromachy was with them as awful as ever. The black crow sat on the King's bedpost, or on the back of his chair, mornin', noon, and night, croaking when he pleased, and quitting his post never. And though the presence of this fearsome creature made and kept the King double as bad as he would have been, no man dared lay finger on it, or touch a feather on its body, for they knew well that if they did their fate would be a long sight worse than that of the King's sons.

And so matters stood, the King going from

bad to worse, and the country in a plight that was both sore and sad; and it seemed threatenin' to become a wilderness and a waste afore long years—when it forced itself upon Dark Patrick in Donegal that it was his duty to get up and go to see King Conall, and lift him and raise him, and rightify and presarve the country. Dark Patrick was a plain, little, low-set, stout-built man, with black hair and a black bush of a beard (which was why they named him Dark Patrick), livin' all by himself in a little hut of a house in a Donegal glen, known and noted the length and breadth of the baronry he lived in, for his wonderful wisdom, the benefits of which the poor man gave free to all his neighbors, who when one o' them met with a snarl that tooth or tongue couldn't loose, it's spit on his stick he'd do of a morning, and off to see Dark Patrick on the matter—and return home happy, with all snarls miraculously unsnarled. And the people of his little corner of the country loved him and gave him as much respect as if he'd been a king, instead of a poor struggling man, who was delving and digging with the spade from June to June, trying to take a scanty living from a niggard patch.

Now, Dark Patrick had remained at home in

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his little hut, giving counsel to his neighbors, or spading on his hillside, while the great matters were going on, and while all the wise men of the world were coming from near and far—quietly he remained here, hopin' and expecting to hear every day that one or other of the great famous wise men, with whose names the world rung, had solved the thing, cured their King, and saved the country. But when, at last, one after the other of these great wise ones failed, and the King was only getting worse and worse, and the country past redemption, Patrick, on a mornin', made up a bundle in a little red handkerchief, put it on the end of his stick over his shoulder, and stuffin' some oat-bread into his pocket, and pulling-to his door after him, set his feet on the road that run south, an' off with him. The neighbors, when, every man from his own hill-side, they saw Dark Patrick with a bundle over his shoulder going south, ran down to the road, getting afore him, to ask him what was the matter, or where was he going—for it was a rare time ever he left home; and it was an extraordinary big matter, indeed, would draw him far from it. Dark Patrick told them what his arrand was, and what he hoped to do. And when they heerd this they thought that the poor man had at last grown

foolish, or else that his head was turned with all the pride that he had well hidden from them in the sixty years of his life in the Donegal glen, and they tried hard to persuade him against such a foolish undertaking, telling him he'd be laughed at for to go to rightify a matter that had defied and beaten all the worl's most notorious scholars and wisest men. They counselled him to go back home to his own little house again, like a good, sensible man, an' take his spade in his fist, an' go out and set 'tatties. To all of them Patrick listened modestly, and for their counsel thanked them quietly, and put them off with the remark that he had a notion to see a bit of the worl' anyhow, and that he might as well travel in the direction of the castle of King Conall as in any other. He bade them good-bye, left his blessin' with them, and set his face south again.

And, right enough, when, after a week's walking, poor Patrick at last reached the capital city, and the castle of King Conall, and knocked at the gates, and asked to see the King, it is laugh hearty the soldiers did at the appearance of the little man in homespun clothes, and with a bundle on his stick done up in a red handkerchief, who wished to see the King; and they wanted to turn him away. But Dark Patrick so persisted that,

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faith, they soon came to own that he was no ordinary countryman. And some of the courtiers gathered at the gate laughed double as hearty as the soldiers, when they saw the appearance of him; and they laughed till they thought their ribs would crack when at last they heard the arrand he was bent upon. And as the doctors had all advised that a good laugh would be a capital thing for the King's complaint, there was one of the courtiers lost no time gettin' into the palace, and straight to the King's bedchamber, and, as best he could for the laughing, telling the King about the comical little man in homespuns, who had tramped with his little red bundle on his stick all the way from the glens of Donegal to lift Cromachy's curse off him. And when they heard it, every soul in the bedchamber, both nurses and doctors, as well as counsellors and scholars, all laughed till the windows rattled—every soul of them except the King himself. He did not laugh at all, at all. But, says he, "Good people, what's the matter with the little man from Donegal, that he's to be laughed at so hearty? Though he carries his little bundle on his stick," says he, "maybe every article in it was honestly come by—which might be more than most of us (including myself) can say for our own belongings. And



even if he wears homespuns, that," says he, "is after all very little proof that the heart inside of them mayn't be sound and good, and that the head mayn't be both clear and clever. And if it is what you laugh at, is the idea of his coming to cure us of the Curse of Cromachy, sure, if he fails to do it, won't he then only be on the same level with the wisest of the 'arth? His coming from the mountains, too," says the King, says he, "is but poor grounds for laughing, for though you do not think it, gentlemen, God makes in the mountains sometimes men as good and as grand and as wise as he makes about a King's Court. Go," says he then, when they were properly rebuked for their laughter, and the shame stinging their cheeks, "Go," says he, "and admit this poor man till I see him, anyway."

And Dark Patrick, with his little bundle now under his arm and his staff in his hand, was led into the presence of King Conall, and to the wonderment of them all, he was as cool and easy-mannered as if he sat among a houseful of his poor neighbors in the glens of Donegal.

The King questioned him regarding his arrand, and he told the King himself the why and the wherefore of his coming, and said he hoped he

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might be of some use. And the King thanked Dark Patrick very graciously indeed.

Cromachy's crow was on the bedpost, and he begun for to croak the minute Dark Patrick come in, and he was shiftin' unaisy from one foot to the other an' hopping now and again from post to post. Says Dark Patrick, says he, "Will you kindly order the three young Princes to be brought in?" And this was done, and the three Princes led into his presence, and lined up before him, while the King was raised up in the bed, and pillows piled behind him to support his back.

"Now," says Dark Patrick, says he, "would your Majesty name all these young gentlemen for me, and tell me what is the curse laid upon each?"

"That," says the King, pointing to one of them, "is Conall, my eldest son, who," says he, and his voice shook, "is to be a murderer, and live by murder. And that boy next him is Donall, my second son, who is to be a robber, and live by robbery. And the last boy is Taig, my youngest son, and the vein of my heart," and the poor man here burst out cryin', "whose lot is to become a beggar and live by beggary all his days.—The shame of it! the shame of it all," says he, "will kill me, is killin' me, and the heart of me is breakin' day by

day, till very soon the subjects who love him will lay him down and pull the green sod over King Conall."

"Oh, King!" says Dark Patrick, "that your sons should become murderer, robber, and beggar should surely kill you with shame, and small wonder. If Long Cromachy had only cursed them to a trade or a profession, you wouldn't have grieved?"

"Grieved!" says King Conall, says he. "If he had cursed them to be only travelling tinkers I could have covered him with kisses."

"It is well that it is so," says Dark Patrick, "and, I think, oh, King Conall! that I can raise you from your sick bed again."

"Oh, if you only could," says the King, his face glowing with joy, "I would cover you with honors and bestow on you possessions that would make you the most envied man in the kingdom."

"Thank you!" says Dark Patrick, quietly. "By your laive, I'll now try what I can do. Open the door of the room," says Dark Patrick, says he, to a butler who stood near the door. "Open the door of the room!" says he. And the door of the room was opened.

"Prince Conall," says Dark Patrick, says he, indicatin' the eldest of the young men, "plaise

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step out till I look at ye!" And the young man blushin' for his shame and sorrow stepped out as directed.

"Faith," remarked the little dark man, "a comely lad ye are to be a murderer!—Now," says he, pointin' to the door, "take your staff in your fist, walk out there, lose no time, but travel on *till you l'arn to be a doctor*—fulfillin' a third of the curse of Cromachy, and lifting a third of the load off your father's heart at the same time."

Prince Conall walked out and off.

The crow at the bed-head gave a croak as if a dagger was after drivin' into its black heart.

"You, Prince Donall," says Dark Patrick, then, says he, indicatin' the second boy, "step out till I see you!" And, "Faith," says he, lookin' over Donall, "a handsome robber you'll make!—Now," says Patrick, indicatin' the door again, "take a grip of your staff, walk out there, lose no time, but push on till you l'arn to be a lawyer—fulfillin'," says he, "two-thirds of the Curse of Cromachy, and liftin' two-thirds of the load off your father's heart."

Prince Donall stepped out and off.

The crow at the bed-head gave a fearsome croak which made them that heard it shiver!

"And Prince Taig," says Dark Patrick, says he,

“let us size you up! A winsome beggar you’ll surely make—and a persuasive one!—Well, take your staff in your fist, step out o’ that door, and travel on without loss o’ time *till you l’arn to be a clargyman—fulfillin’*,” says he, “the full curse of Cromachy, and lifting all the load off your poor father’s heart.”

Prince Taig stepped out of the door and away with him.

The crow at the bed-head let out of him a *screagh* that was blood-curdlin’ to the ears of the bravest there, spread his wings, and bursted through the window with a crash—never to return! . . .

“And now,” says Dark Patrick, says he to the King, into whose face, as well as the faces of all the courtiers and counsellors, doctors and nurses, present, was beginning to come the light of intelligence, “now, King Conall,” says he, “rise up from your bed, a sick man no longer, and a sad one never more!”

It took more than a minute before the whole thing, in all its wonder and joy, could shine clear into the minds of King Conall and all present—more than a minute were they dumbfounded. And Dark Patrick had his foot on the threshold passing out of the door, when the King realized what

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had happened, and was able to speak for the joy. He called upon Dark Patrick, and Dark Patrick turned upon his step, saying, "What is your Majesty's wishes? Or can I do anything more for you?"

"Within all the world and its wishes," says King Conall, says he, "there's nothing more you can do for me, for there's nothing more I want now. I am now a happy man, ruling over a happy country; but it is my turn," says he, "to do something for you, poor man—some little thing as a token of my joy and gratitude for the everlastin' obligation that you have laid upon myself and my country, and that we can never hope to repay. Bear witness," says the King, says he, to his counsellors and courtiers, "that I here and now bestow upon this poor man, and his heirs after him for all time, the kingdom of Connaught, that he may reign over it rich and happy, and bequeath it to his children when he dies, leaving them happy and prosperous after him. And, moreover," says he to Dark Patrick, "I want to hear over and above this any other request in the wide world that you have to ask, and if it is in my power it will be granted as quick as asked."

"King Conall," says Dark Patrick, says he, stepping into the middle of the room, and mak-

ing his obedience to the King—"King Conall," says he, "for your very great generosity, I thank you from my heart, and pray God may keep with you both the will and the power to be generous until the day that, an old, old man, at the end of a happy life, you bid the world good-bye. For your generosity I thank you! and sorry indeed I am to decline what you so generously offer; but my own little hut at home in the glens of Donegal is both greater and dearer to me than the kingdom of Connaught, and for the kingdom of Connaught I would not part with it. I have content there, for no worries reach me, and my sleep deserts me not at night. I am happy, for I have the love of all my neighbors. And I am wealthy there as any king can be, for I have a little hill-side, health, and a spade. Good-bye. Heaven's blessing remain with you."

And Dark Patrick was gone.

## XIV

### JACK AND THE LORD HIGH MAYOR

**O**NCE on a time there was a poor woman living ten miles from Dublin, who had one son, called Jack. And a fine brave boy was the same Jack, merry as the mischief, and as full of roguery as an egg's full of meat. The poor fellow was mighty fond of all beasts, which he loved like brothers, and there wasn't a wing in the wood which wasn't as familiar to him as his prayers. He had a pet rabbit that used to make its bed on the cat's back in the chimney-corner; and when it wasn't either using or abusing the cat, the little rabbit would be following the tail of Jack or his mother. The minute he tumbled out of bed in the morning, Jack would skip to the door, and blow three times on a tin whistle,—when all the birds of the wood, who were waiting the call, would wing their way to him for their morning meal. And he'd then have around him a gathering of them as great as



Granuaile's army—and they feeding and frolicking with him.

Lo, and behold ye! There was one day that the Lord High Mayor of Dublin with his royal staff of footmen and fine gentlemen were passing that way, going to visit a great Prince in the North. And it happened that the Lord High Mayor, getting a thirst on him, because the day was hot, dropped into Jack's mother's little house, and asked Jack, who was within, if he could have a bowl of buttermilk.

"You surely can, me Lord High Mayor," said Jack; "two, if you'll take them." Then he raised a bit of rod, and gave the rabbit a tip of it, saying, "Rabbit, go look for my mother, and bring her here quick—to give the Lord High Mayor of Dublin a bowl of buttermilk." The rabbit, after getting the switch, naturally ran out of the door. And Jack remarked, "My mother, she's gone to Galway, but the rabbit will soon fetch her."

This was Jack's bit of fun. But the Lord High Mayor, not knowing the comical character he was, said, "But Galway is two-hundred mile from here."

"No matter for that," said the rogue Jack. "There's many a magical thing that same rabbit can do."

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And it wasn't two minutes till Jack's mother, who had only been blading kale in the garden, strolled into the house, with the rabbit following at her heels.

The Lord High Mayor, when he saw this, was speechless with wonder, and said, "Why, that's the most extraordinary rabbit that ever walked the world! He'd be beyond value to me, for there's often many a message I need to send quickly to the four ends of Ireland. Will you sell him to me, Jack?"

"Oh!" said Jack, "it would take a sweet penny o' money to purchase that rabbit."

"I'll give you a hundred pounds for him," said the Lord High Mayor.

Said Jack, "As I don't wish to deny the Lord High Mayor of Dublin any request he'd ask, I'll let you have him for a hundred."

The Lord High Mayor then called on his treasurer to count out to Jack from his gold bag a hundred pounds,—which he did. And, jumping with joy, and dancing with delight, he took up the rabbit, and continued his journey.

When the Lord High Mayor, with his Court, reached the Castle of the Prince of the North, he was bursting with pride to show the powers of his wonderful rabbit. And he said to the Prince,

"I want you to do me a favour, by giving, to-morrow night, a great dinner in honour of my particular friend, the King of Munster." And he asked to have every Lord and Lady within a day's ride of the Castle invited.

"But where's the King of Munster?" said the Prince, in surprise.

"He's where he ought to be," said the Lord High Mayor, "sitting on his golden throne at home."

"Is it crazy you are then," said the Prince, "to give a dinner to-morrow night in honour of a man, who is, at this minute, seven days' and seven nights' journey from here?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" said the Lord High Mayor, "that's the fun of the thing." Said he, "I have discovered a secret by which I can produce in five minutes any individual living within the earth's ends. And I want to do you the honour of treating all your friends to the first sample of my secret."

"Well, that's wonderful," said the Prince, "and I'm sure I'll be both honoured and obliged."

Without any delay the Prince began speeding messengers north, south, east and west, inviting every lord and lady and man of great degree to the dinner that was to be given at his Castle to-

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morrow night, in honour of Munster's King. And he had a hundred cooks sworn in to prepare the greatest dinner that he'd ever given.

Very well and good. All the next evening, the roads that reached the Castle were black with the throngs of lords and ladies and men of great degree who came driving and riding, walking, creeping, and crawling to the dinner. As the clock struck the dinner hour, every soul of them was in his seat, licking his lips for the feast to begin. And they said, all together, "But, where's the King o' Munster?"

The Prince proudly said, "My friend here, the Lord High Mayor of Dublin, will enlighten you about him."

"Where is he?" said they to the Lord High Mayor.

Said the Lord High Mayor, rising to his feet, "My dearly beloved friend, the King of Munster, is where he ought to be, sittin' on his golden throne in his own palace in Munster, seven days' and seven nights' journey from here. Dinner will begin the very minute his Kingship arrives."

And the instant they heard that, the lords and the ladies and men of great degree, rose up to their feet, and nearly raised off the Castle's roof with the rioting. They said, "If the Lord High

Mayor of Dublin conceits himself he can come to the North, and play larks like this with the people here, we'll learn him a lesson that his tutor left out."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the Lord High Mayor. "Take your seats again, gentlemen and ladies, and sharpen your knives and forks: for the feast is soon going to begin." And then he explained to them how he had got a wonderful secret by which he could produce within five minutes any man he needed, from any end of the earth; and that he was specially honouring his friend, the Prince, and all his good friends, the lords and ladies present, and men of great degree, by giving the first sample of the secret in their presence.

Right heartily he laughed at the row he had raised out of the company. Then they laughed when they understood it. And they took their seats, while the Lord High Mayor producing his rabbit, and setting it on the floor, hit it behind with a kippeen, and sent it skipping from the room. Then he took his own seat at the Prince's right hand, and began sharpening his knife and fork. "For," said he, "gentlemen and ladies, the king of Munster will now be with you in two shakes of a lamb's lug." But two minutes passed, and no King came. Then three minutes, and no

King. Five minutes went by, and no King yet. Said the Lord High Mayor, who was beginning to fidget himself, "To be sure Munster is a long ways from here."

The head cook came in asking would he serve the turkeys, as they were beginning to burn. The Lord High Mayor flung three salt-cellars at him, and told him to keep his face out of sight for two minutes more.

Very well and good. The Prince himself at length began to grow uneasy. And the company were showing some concern when the rabbit was ten minutes gone—and neither King nor carle showing his nose yet.

"Look out o' the window," said the Lord High Mayor to the men who sat next it, "and tell me if you don't see the King coming up the avenue."

Ten men looked out of the window at once, and said the only thing in the avenue was a strayed ass feeding on the flower-beds.

"That's mortal strange," said the Lord High Mayor. "But, gentlemen and ladies, have patience, for the King of Munster had maybe to get into his golden dress before leaving. I'll put my head on it, that he'll be here in two minutes at most."

The company began to mutter, and the Prince to get mighty uneasy, when two minutes went by without a King coming—and then five minutes! A drove of cooks then thronged into the room, and threw off their aprons, saying the dinner was burnt black as their shoe, and they'd have no more act or part in the ceremonies. The company then got cantankerous, and the Lord High Mayor of Dublin tried to calm them, saying, "Ladies, and gentlemen, I'm sorry, but it seems to me there's some mistake."

"And it seems to us," said they, "there's some mistake. Here we're in hundreds from every art, part, and point of the compass, some of us feeling as if we had fasted for a fortnight, and neither bit nor scrap to put into our heads, because of a low-down prank that you thought you could play on us simple souls o' the North." And said they, "By this and by that, but we'll take the worth of it out o' your corpus, and deliver you in Dublin with a mark on you every place ever your mother laid a thumb."

And upon the poor Lord High Mayor the party fell. And it was only by pitchforking dragoons into the room that the Prince was able to get the Lord High Mayor out of it while the breath was still in his body.

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But the lords and ladies didn't leave a whole pane in the castle's windows, or two sticks of furniture together, when they said their farewells.

Very well and good. It was a month's time before the Lord High Mayor of Dublin was fit to be fetched home. And as his party came nigh to Dublin, he directed that they should halt at Jack's house, and that his dragoons should seize the rascal, and hang him to the first tree. And who do you think should they see at the door-step, as they came up, but my brave Jack, himself.

"There," said the Lord High Mayor, "is the natarnal vagabond. Give him no mercy."

But that minute, Jack, who wasn't watching the party, and didn't see them, put his whistle to his mouth, and blew on it. The Lord High Mayor wondered what he was whistling for at this hour of the morning. But next instant he saw the skies darkening with the flocks of birds that gathered from the woods and the scrugs in answer to the call for their morning feed. And they lit on Jack's head and shoulders, and made the size of a fair around him.

The Lord High Mayor held back his dragoons, and called upon Jack, asking him what kind of wonderful whistle was that he had; and if the birds of the world always came at its call.



“Oh! my Lord High Mayor,” said Jack, “this is an extraordinary whistle indeed, and there’s not a bird in the world but must answer to it—come and alight as you see these, all over and around you.”

“Well! well!” said the Lord High Mayor, “that whistle is most extraordinary. Would you sell it?”

“Well,” said Jack, “I’m no ways anxious to sell it; but as I don’t like to deny the Lord High Mayor of Dublin, you can have it for a hundred pounds.”

“It’s a bargain,” said the Lord High Mayor. And he called upon his treasurer to pay a hundred golden pounds out of the money bag to Jack, for the whistle.

Then the Lord High Mayor, taking the whistle, told his procession to hurry on with him to Dublin. “Because,” he said, “I’m going to surprise and astonish all Dublin with this wonderful whistle, the like of which was never seen in the world before, and maybe never will again.”

Very well and good. When the Lord High Mayor got home, he hired the biggest hall in Dublin, and posted placards all over the city, inviting every one who owned a bird of any sort, size, shape or pattern, to come to a tea-party in

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this Hall on a certain day, and bring their birds along with them.

And a great gathering it surely was that came to the tea-party, bringing all sorts, sizes, shapes, and samples of birds known to creation. And when they had got their tea, the Lord High Mayor said that he had a little delightful surprise in store for them. He ordered all the windows and doors of the hall to be thrown open, and then asked the audience if they would be so kind as to open their cages and let their birds fly away. At this request there got up in the Hall an uproar like the Fair of Carney, protestin' against any such proceedin's. And the Lord High Mayor, when he heard it, laughed right heartily. Then he produced his whistle and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have got a little magic whistle here, whose virtue is that all birds between the earth's ends must come at its call, and alight on my head and shoulders and all around me. I want to honour my own City and people of Dublin by giving them the first exhibition."

When the people heard this, the uproar went down, and they thanked the Lord High Mayor for the honour he was doing them, and were tumbling over one another in their haste to let their birds go. When the birds were gone, the Lord

High Mayor said, "To give you a good test of the whistle, we'll wait till the last tail disappears from sight."

Not long they had to wait for that. The goldfinches, blackbirds, canaries, pigeons, and the rest of the clanjaffrey went like a streak o' lightnin' over the chimneys and roofs of the houses and high church-spires. And when the last had disappeared, the Lord High Mayor still took his time before he blew. When he did blow, he said, "Now lads, look out to see the sight."

They rolled over one another in their hurry to the windows to see the flight o' birds returning. And the Lord High Mayor yelled at them to stand back from the windows and doors, and give the poor birds room to get in again.

"Faith," said they, "there's no sign of them yet."

"There should be," said the Lord High Mayor, "but then of course there's a strong high wind blowing to-day. So it may be another quarter minute before they appear."

A quarter minute and five quarters went by, and still there wasn't a feather showing. So the bird-owners begun to get a bit uneasy.

Said the Lord High Mayor, "I'm afeard I didn't blow loud enough."

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"We're afeard not," says they.

He went to the window and blew his best this time.

"And, now," said he, "watch out for the rush."

Though the people watched with all their eyes, neither rush nor crush was coming. And the Lord High Mayor said, "Boys, my wind is weak. Who's the best blower in the room?"

A big butcher took the whistle, and nearly burst it at a blow. And the Lord High Mayor said, "That's the music that'll fetch them."

But sorrow a wing showed: and the people had their eyes out of the sockets watching.

"Boys," said the Lord High Mayor, "I'm sorry to state it—but I'm afeard there's a mistake somewhere."

And then was the *roolye-boolye*, beside which Bedlam would be quieter than a cloister. With every rioter wanting revenge for his own bird, if a regiment of troopers had not ridden into the room on horse-back, there wouldn't have been two bits left of the Lord High Mayor's body but would be flaked into flitterjigs.

It took three months this time, and all the Doctors in Dublin to fix him on his feet again. And it took a fortune from him to buy fresh birds for half of Dublin.

The minute he was fit for it, the Lord High Mayor's first order, however, was for the Court to come along with him till he would arrest the rascal Jack, and have him shot to pieces by troopers in the streets of Dublin.

Poor Jack, getting word of what was waiting for him, went to the nearest butcher without delay, got a bladder filled with bullock's blood, tied it at the mouth, and took it home, and, putting his old mother into bed, tied the bladder of blood around her neck. He was sitting innocently by the fire-side, when the dragoons arrived in front of his door, and the Lord High Mayor himself put in his head.

Said the Lord High Mayor, "You villain, I have you at last, and will now make you pay with your life for the rascality you wrought on me. Come along, to be shot in the streets of Dublin as an example to all rascals."

Jack said, "And if you shoot me, who am the support of my poor old mother, what will she do for her living?"

"I don't care a horny-button whether she lives or dies," said the Lord High Mayor. "The mother of such a vagabond son would have been better dead-born, anyhow."

"Well," said Jack, rising up, "I'm willing to

go with you. But before I go I'll put my poor old mother out of pain." Again going over to his mother's bed, before the Lord High Mayor could jump to get hold of him, he plunged a big long knife into the bladder of blood around his mother's neck. She groaned, and the blood squirted to the rafters. The Lord High Mayor, putting a yell out of him, said, "Now, my lad, that you have murdered your mother, you deserve your death ten times over."

"Oh!" said Jack, "if you make such bones about the killing of an old woman who was half-ways in the grave, anyway, I'll bring her to life again."

"What do you mean?" said the Lord High Mayor.

"I'll show you that," said Jack.

And, climbing on a chair, he lifted down a cow's horn that was stuck between the rafters, and which he used to go out on the hills with and blow upon to raise the echoes. Down Jack took this horn, and, standing in the middle of the floor, blew three blasts. At the first blast, the Lord High Mayor saw the mother move in the bed. At the second she rolled over, and at the third blast, she sat up in bed, and called for a bowl of tay.

“Why! Jack, Jack!” said the Lord High Mayor, “that’s the most wonderful horn ever I saw or heard tell of. Would you sell it?”

“Well,” said Jack, “it’s such a handy horn any time I take a notion of killing a man, that I’m loath to part with it.”

Said the Lord High Mayor, “I have about me at home the stupidest servants that ever stepped in shoe-leather. They madden me a hundred times a day. And I have a wife who’d provoke a saint once her tongue begins wagging. There’s many a time when I’d feel it a mighty relief to me entirely if I could kill a couple or so of these people—only it’s again’ the law even for a Lord High Mayor to kill anybody he likes. But if I had that horn of yours I could slaughter them by the dozen and leave them slaughtered till I cooled off, and cared to call them to life again—and it would be a rare relief to me. I’m willing to give you a hundred pounds for it, Jack.”

“Well,” said Jack, “it’s sorry I am to part with such a handy horn, but at the same time it’s loath I’d be to deny the Lord High Mayor of Dublin anything he demands. So here it is.”

And the Lord High Mayor had his treasurer pay down to Jack a hundred golden pounds. And, as proud as a peacock to have his horn, back he



“That’s the most wonderful horn ever I saw or heard tell of.”—Page 230.





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marched, at the head of his dragoons to Dublin. There he sent messengers for five men, who had given him particular trouble about valuable birds that they had lost the Day o' the Whistle (as it had come to be called, by the citizens). Not to be wasting time while waiting on these men, he sent a servant to the kitchen, where his wife was ballyraggin' the cook, to kindly request the good woman to stop her tongue, and shut her mouth, and pretend she was a lady. The servant, however, knowing that it wasn't wholesome to carry such an order to his mistress, stood and stuttered.

"What are you standin' and stuttering about?" said the Lord High Mayor, reaching for a good long knife that he had handy.

"I'm afeard," said the servant, "to bring my mistress any such order."

"Then, by this and by that, you stuttering idiot," said the Lord High Mayor, making at him, "I'll soon put the fear out o' you." And in a jiffey he made a stiffey of the servant. To the stair-head he then went, and called down to his wife that if she didn't stop her bellowing down there, he would go down to teach her good manners. At three bounds his wife was up the stairs, and facing him.

“What do you mean, Sir?” she shouted, “daring to talk that way to me.”

“Here’s what I mean,” said the Lord High Mayor, leaping at her with the knife, and leaving her likewise a stiffey by the servant’s side.

Running his eye round him then to see who was next, he beheld his valet disappearing out o’ the door. “Come’ back here, you villain!” shouted the Lord High Mayor.

And the valet, shaking so that the teeth in his head rattled, fell on his knees, saying, “My Lord High Mayor, I have never done anything but what was right.”

Said the Lord High Mayor, “Do you remember the Monday morning five years ago, that you forgot to polish my shoes?”

“Oh!” said the valet, clasping his hands in front of him, “I’ll only be three years with your Lordship again’ Candlemas. It was the fellow before me who forgot.”

“No matter for that,” said the Lord High Mayor, “if it had been you, you’d have forgotten it, too. So here’s to learn you a lesson.” And he sprang at the valet with the knife, and laid him stiff beside the other two.

The five men whom he had sent for arrived now, expecting they were going to receive large

sums of money. And they said, "Well, it's time that you'd pay us—for you've kept us a long while waiting."

"Yes, you villains," said the Lord High Mayor, "I've kept you a long time waiting, but I'll pay you now. Take that," said he, as he struck one of them, "and take that! and that! and that! and that!" giving the knife to the rest of them, and stretching all five by the side of them who'd got the early start.

The servants learning what was happening, ran out of the house, and raised an uproar, saying the Lord High Mayor had gone mad, and was murdering all before him. One policeman after another rushed into the house to seize him, till six had gone in. And it was the finest o' fun to his Lordship to lay each o' them out stiff as he came in. And the clamour of the Lord High Mayor's madness and murdering went like wild-fire. From street and strand the people rushed and ran, making a mighty gathering around the Lord High Mayor's Castle—with the Bishop and Judge and Commander of the Troops heading them.

And the Lord High Mayor, in the best o' good humour at how well his scheme worked—for so far—went out on the balcony with his horn, and

said, "Ladies and gentlemen, and my Lord Bishop, isn't this a mighty pleasant morning?"

"The pleasure has been all on your side, so far," the crowd shouted back. "But come down here, till we hang you."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the Lord High Mayor, right heartily, "Gentlemen and ladies, this is the greatest joke of my life—and when you see the end of it, you'll admit that it is the greatest joke of your lives, too. There's a dozen people more or less, lying stiff dead inside. In my enjoyment I've forgotten the exact count—but two or three more or less, isn't here or there."

"Where does the joke come in?" shouted the people.

"Here's where the joke comes in," said the Lord High Mayor. "I hold in my hand a horn, three blows from which will make every one o' the dead climb to his feet, and call for a bowl o' tay. And they'll then be in better health than they were ever in their lives before. This magic horn I have procured at great expense; but as some of you suffered inconvenience, and all of you more or less disappointment, on the last occasion, on which I strove to provide innocent diversion for you, I don't mind the outlay, inasmuch as it enables me to repay you several times over for your former

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disappointment. As I want you all, without distinction of class or creed, to enjoy the entertainment I have in store for you, I'll have my servants carry out the dead, and lay them in full view, while I recall them to creation again."

The dead ones were accordingly carried out, while the Lord High Mayor stepped about with his horn under his arm, and his hands under his coat-tails, and he whistling "The Lasses o' Limerick."

"Now," said he, when all was arranged, "before I begin, wouldn't your Lordship the Bishop, or your Honour the Judge, or your Excellency the Commander of the Troops, like to come up here and be killed, and have the fun of coming back to life again with the crowd?"

The Bishop and the Judge and the Commander of the Troops thanked him for the favour, but asked to be excused, for various reasons.

"Well," he said, "isn't there some one down there that covets the experience?"

But no, none of them coveted it. Every one there had his own excuse for not being killed and called to life again that particular morning.

"Very well then," said the Lord High Mayor, "we'll have to be content with resurrecting these we have ready. Stand back," he said to the peo-

ple, "and let the fresh air to the creatures when they come to life again."

The people crushed back, and the Lord High Mayor put the horn to his lips and blew three blasts.

But, behold you! contrary to all expectation, not one o' the dead ones rose up and called for a bowl of tay. Not one o' them even twinkled an eyelid.

A roar rose up from the crowd—and the Lord Mayor himself was a trifle staggered. But he explained, "Naturally, I didn't blow loud enough for them to hear me."

"Naturally you didn't," said the crowd, with their knuckles beginning to itch to be at him.

"Well, they'll hear me this time, if they were born stone-deaf," said the Lord High Mayor. And he nearly blew the roof off his head.

But none of the dead ones turned a hair, and the crowd put up a yell that was paralysing.

"Easy! easy!" said the Lord High Mayor, who was getting pale about the gills, "there's some mistake here."

"Faith! yes," said the crowd, starting to climb up for him, "there was a mighty mistake in allowing you to live as long as you have. But," said they, as they caught him neck and heels, "that'll

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quickly be remedied." And they bundled him out to be burnt at a stake.

And it was only through a wonderful wizard from Connaught, appearing on the scene and raising the dead ones to life again, that the troops were able to save the life of the Lord High Mayor this time.

Determined, now, to have the life of the vagabond Jack for certain, the Lord High Mayor never stopped or stayed till he was at Jack's mother's house, with a regiment of dragoons, and had Jack tied into a leathern sack, and slung over the horse, and headed for Dublin—where he had left a hundred men building a fire in the public square, for the villain's burning; and a hundred messengers bidding all Dublin to the spectacle—to compensate them for their previous disappointments.

Now, the royal party entered an Inn on the outskirts of the city, to get refreshments. And my brave Jack, peeping through a pin-hole in his sack, beheld, coming down the road, the greatest gentleman in Dublin, after the Lord High Mayor himself. And this gentleman, more by the same token, was engaged to be married to the Lord High Mayor's own daughter. All at once Jack began lamenting aloud, "I can't marry her,



and I'll not marry her, and all the Kings in Dublin won't make me marry her."

"Who are you in the sack, and what are you raising this row about?" said the gentleman, coming forward.

"I can't marry her, and I'll not marry her, and all the Kings in Dublin won't make me marry her," Jack cried out, louder than before.

"Whom are they forcing you to marry, my poor fellow?" said the great gentleman,

"Don't you recognise," said Jack, "the Lord High Mayor's horses?"

"I do, but what about that?" said the gentleman.

Said Jack, "The Lord High Mayor's daughter, who was engaged to be married to a very great gentleman, has changed her mind, and wants to marry me, who have no way to support her. So her father with his dragoons, is bringing me to Dublin in a sack, out of which they'll not free me till the knot's tied. She's taking a pig in a poke to be sure—but—I can't marry her, and I won't marry her, and all the Kings in Dublin won't make me marry her."

The great gentleman was in mortal distress when he heard that the Lord High Mayor's daughter had changed her mind. But he said, "As I

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have no objections to marrying her, how much will you take to let me into the sack in your stead?"

"I'll let you in for a hundred pounds," said Jack.

"It's a bargain," said the gentleman, jumping at this, and letting Jack out, and paying him down a hundred pounds. And Jack tied up the gentleman safely in his stead.

And when the Lord High Mayor, beside the bonfire in Dublin Square, and in the presence of the mightiest gathering that ever gathered since Adam left the Garden, cut the sack, and saw step out of it, instead of Jack, the second gentleman in the Kingdom and his own son-in-law, he got such a frantic fit, that one-half of Dublin had to hold him from burning the gentleman—while the other half started laughing, and couldn't stop for a fortnight.

His weight in gold wouldn't induce the Lord High Mayor to go again after the rascal Jack, who with his hundreds o' pounds, built a house and bought a farm, and married a wife. And he and his wife, and his poor old mother, lived happy and well ever after.

Or if they didn't, that you and I may.

## XV

### THE QUARE BIRDS\*

**N**ELLY McGRATH and her man Dinny were patterns to the parish of Poolbeg. For three and thirty years, to the world's knowin', they'd lived together without either of them learnin' how a frown looked on the face of the other. And 'tis like they'd have died in the odour of ignorance, if the devil one Christmas eve hadn't sent their way Johnny the Sthroller, trying to make sale of a string of birds he'd snared in the snow—and a pair of which Dinny bought, and Nelly broiled for their Christmas Eve supper.

Dinny, good man, ate his with delight. And as he cleaned his mouth and smacked his lips at the heels o' the hunt—"Thanks be to God and you Nelly!" says he, "them were the tinderest, tastiest, pair o' blackbirds that ever passed under my tooth."

"Amen! and thanks be to Him over again,"

\* Kickham has, I think, a version of this little folk-tale either in his charming "Knocknagow" or in "Sally Cavanagh."

says Nelly. "Fit for a King's aitin' were the same pair of birds.—Thrushes, Dinny," says she.

"Blackbirds, Nelly," says Dinny.

"Oh, but Dinny," says Nelly, "I'm tellin' you they were thrushes. I ought to know, that plucked them."

"But, Nelly, sure I'm tellin' you they were blackbirds. I ought to know, that bought them."

"Have I eyes in my head, Dinny, or have I not?"

"I used to think you had, Nelly. But whether you have or no, people accuses meself of a pair o' peepers."

"I'm sorry you don't use them, then, Dinny, to learn to know a thrush from a blackbird."

"If my neighbors used theirs," says Dinny, "they might some time come to know a blackbird from a thrush."

"Now I'm not arguin', Dinny, and you know I wouldn't argue. But the birds were thrushes."

"And 't isn't worth arguin' about," says Dinny. "But truth's truth, and the birds were blackbirds."

"Dinny," says Nelly, "you'd provoke St. Pether! Sure I tell you the birds were thrushes."

"'Tis yourself that's provokin', Nelly," says Dinny. "Sure I tell you they were blackbirds."

"Thrushes!" says Nelly.

"Blackbirds!" says Dinny.

Then Nelly began to hum to herself in a provokin' kind of way, as she went about washin' the dishes; and Dinny immediately struck up a whistle, as he pulled his pipe from his pocket and began teasin' the tobacco for it. And the pair of them who had never cross word or quarrel afore, didn't speak to each other for a month.

Well, that fared well, and it didn't fare ill, as the story-tellers say; and the year wore round till Christmas came again. Nelly had a fine Christmas Eve supper for herself and Dinny; and when they thanked God, and sat down to it, Nelly she put a hearty laugh out of her, and says she:

"Dinny, *avourneen*, do you mind the pair of fools we made of ourselves this night twelve months?"

And Dinny laughed, too, and says he:

"Aye, Nelly, who'd ever believe that the pair of us could make such idiots of ourselves?"

"About nothing," says Nelly.

"About nothing," says Dinny. "The more shame for us," says he. "A miserly pair of blackbirds—bad luck to them!"

"Ay, a miserable pair o' thrushes—bad luck to them!" says Nelly.

"Nelly, dear," says Dinny, lookin' at her reproachfully, "sure you aren't goin' to begin it all over again, for the sake of them weeshy blackbirds?"

"Indeed, an' I'm not, Dinny," says Nelly, "goin' to make a blatherskite o' meself for the sake of a dirty pair o' thrushes."

"Have raison with you now, Nelly! Sure you know as well as I do that they were blackbirds."

"Nobbut have raison with yourself, Dinny," says Nelly, "right well you know they were thrushes."

"Blackbirds!" says Dinny, "and I'll maintain it on any ground!"

"Thrushes!" says Nelly, "an' I'll swear to it!"

Dinny, he began to whistle, and Nelly, she began to hum; and after that a word from wan to the other of them didn't cross their lips for three months, till their friends come and brought them together.

That fared well, and it didn't fare ill, as they say in the old stories; and the year wore on, and Christmas Eve came round once more. And as Dinny and Nelly thanked the Lord, and sat down to a lovely supper that Nelly had cooked for the pair of them, Nelly, she broke into a laugh, and says she:

“Dinny, do you mind the pair o’ fools we both made of ourselves the last two Christmas Eves gone?”

“Oh, don’t I, Nelly!” says Dinny, says he. “Tom-fools!”

“*Omadhauns*, entirely,” says Nelly.

“The laugh of the worl’, an’ no wondher,” says Dinny.

“Sometimes I can hardly believe it of us,” says Nelly.

“Silly childer wouldn’t be guilty of it,” says Dinny.

“Childer could teach us more common sense,” says Nelly.

“You might call them birds thrushes from now till mornin’,” says Dinny, “and I’d only smile at it, Nelly.”

“Thanky, Dinny,” says Nelly; “but sure why should you smile, when they were thrushes?”

“Nelly, Nelly, Nelly!” says Dinny. “Sure you know I don’t want to dispute it with you, but I tell you the birds were blackbirds.”

“I’m not disputin’ it meself, either,” says Nelly, says she; “but you shouldn’t contradict the known truth—the birds were thrushes.”

“Who’s conthradictin’ the known truth?” says

Dinny. "They were blackbirds an' you know it."

"Thrushes, they were," says Nelly; "and you'd say it yourself only the conthrariness is riz in ye."

"The morrow is holy Christmas Day, so tell the truth and shame the devil, Nelly. Say they were blackbirds and have done with it!"

"The morrow is holy Christmas Day," says Nelly, "so tell the truth yourself. Say they were thrushes!"

"For Heaven's sake, don't keep contentionin' about two scrawny blackbirds, Nelly."

"It's you that is contentionin', Dinny; the birds were thrushes!"

"You'll brak' my temper, out an' out. I say they were blackbirds!"

"I say they were thrushes!"

"Blackbirds!"

"Thrushes!"

Dinny turned round, then, and drew out his pipe and tobacco and began whistlin', leavin' his supper untasted. And Nelly, turnin' her back to it, too, took up a stockin' she had been darnin', and began hummin' very tauntingly.

That minute the latch was lifted, and who should step in but Johnny the Stroller, with a string of birds over his shoulder. Dinny and



Nelly both jumped to their feet and ran for Johnny, who looked bewildered from wan to the other!

"Johnny," says Nelly, "it's delighted I am that you've come."

"It's delighted meself is, Johnny," says Dinny, says he, "that you've come at this moment."

"For," says Nelly, says she, "I want you to show this man o' mine the fool he's been makin' of himself."

"Johnny, *agra*," says Dinny, "you've come in the nick o' time to let this woman see the *omad-haun* she is."

"In the name o' patience," says Johnny, says he, lookin' moidhered from one to the other, "what's this all about, anyhow?"

"'Tis about the two little thrushes we bought from you this night two years," says Nelly. "You'll hardly credit it, but this man o' mine actually argues they were blackbirds."

"Ha, ha, ha!" says Dinny, says he. "Johnny, if ye hadn't heard it with your own ears, ye wouldn't take it on St. Pether's word that that woman has been for two years maintainin' them two blackbirds ye sold me were thrushes. Tell her now they were blackbirds, and prove her a fool to her face."

“Johnny,” says Nelly, “tell this man o’ mine that they were what they were—thrushes—and shame him outright.”

“Musha, Nelly and Dinny,” says Johnny, says he, “it’s mortal sorry I am, if the pair of ye have been for two years blatherskitin’ and riotin’, like a pair o’ onchristian pagans, over thim two weeshy, dawny, scrawny, onsignificant STAR-LIN’S—may the divil obliterate their mimory!”

## XVI

### THE SON OF STRENGTH

**O**NCE on a time when pigs were swine, the country of Connaught was in the habit of sending its men to Ulster to look for work there. Right bad masters the Ulster men made, burdening the Connaught men to break their backs. And the nearer it came to the ending of a Connaught man's term the terribler were the tasks that the Ulster men put to them, so as to drive them away without wages—or maybe kill some of them outright, at only the cost of the coffin.

One poor Connaught man, who was sorely harassed in this way, was at length made by his master to shoulder an oak-tree that would kill a horse. It broke both his back and his heart, and sent the poor man home to Connaught to die. But so terrible was the grip he had held on the oak-tree, that an acorn on which his fist closed, remained there, and no man could unclench his fist and take the acorn out. On the day that he came to die, the

poor man's wife gave birth to a son: and the dying man said, "My last request to you, wife, is that when I'm dead to-day, you'll take the acorn from my fist, and plant it; and then nurse your son at your breast for seven years—and as much longer as till he is able to uproot the oak-tree that has grown from the acorn. Then your son will be the Son of Strength, and you'll send him off to punish the Ulster men, for their cruelties to the poor creatures who go to them from Connaught."

"I promise to do that," said his wife.

And when he was dead, his wife forced his fist open, and took the acorn and planted it.

She nursed the child at her breast till he was seven years old. Then the young oak-tree was strong and stout, and she took out the child to see if he could pull it up. The child tried, but failed. "I'll nurse you for another seven years," she said, "to see if you can do better."

And she nursed him at her breast for another seven years. And at the end of that time, she took out her son again to test him at the oak-tree, which was now stout and sturdy. But the son failed to pull it up. "I'll nurse you still another seven years," she said, "to see if you can best the oak-tree then."

And at the end of that time, the oak-tree was

great and strong, and with roots growing far and wide, and deep also, and she took out her son to test the oak-tree. At the first pull, he loosened it in the ground. At the second pull, the roots ripped and tore. And at the third he had the tree with him, and with a shout whirled it round his head as if it was a sapling.

"That's good," said his mother. "You are now the Son of Strength, and can set out for Ulster, to punish them who killed your father."

He trimmed the great oak-tree, making it a fine walking-stick for himself, and getting his mother's blessing, set off for Ulster. When Ulster he reached, the first man he met was the King, himself, who asked him, "Who are you, and what do you want?"

He said, "I'm a boy looking for a master."

"That's good," said the King, "I'm a master looking for a boy. What kinds of work are you willing to do?" "Little partiality I have," said the Boy, "but I'm able to take a turn out of anything that comes in my way." "That's the sort of boy I want," said the King. "I'll give you at the end of a year and a day your weight in gold, if you'll do all the work I lay before you."

"The wages are enticing," said he, "and I'm your man."

Very well and good. Next morning he was up betimes, and asked the King on what work he would make an appetite for his breakfast.

“I’ll soon show you that,” said the King. And he led him out to the biggest barn that he had ever beheld. It was a mile square, and a mile high. One-half of it was crammed with corn sheaves, and the other half cleared for thrashing. The King handed the Boy a great flail, the size of himself, saying, “When you have all that corn thrashed, you’ll have your appetite made, and no breakfast you’ll get till it’s done.” And then off he went, chuckling.

The Boy looked first at the corn that half filled the barn, and then at the flail. And in scorn he flung the flail away twenty miles. It fell on a city, and swept off half the roofs and the heads of a quarter of the inhabitants. Then he took his own walking stick, and began to thrash the corn. Every whirl of his oak-tree lifted a bit off the barn—and every stroke sent the straw to the skies. And showers of broken straw, and whirlwinds of corn swept the land for a hundred miles, and terrified the inhabitants who thought the end of the world was surely coming.

Very soon he was finished and two bits of the barn weren’t left together. He went to the King

to enquire if there wasn't some other little job he might do for him before breakfast.

"Surely, you haven't the corn thrashed so quickly," said the King. "Yes, and the barn into the bargain," said the Boy. "That's a terrible thing," said the King. Then he said, "I haven't anything more for you to do till you have got your breakfast."

While he was breakfasting, the King consulted his advisers regarding this terrible fellow. And they agreed with the King that the man who could thrash such a barnful of corn before breakfast, and the barn into the bargain, would surely kill all of them, if they did not first kill him.

"But who will kill him?" said the King.

Said they, "After breakfast send him to the Wood of the Wild Bulls, to bring home a bull for dinner. No one ever ventured within seven miles of that Wood—and came back alive."

"That's a good idea," said the King. And after breakfast he told the Boy he needed a bull for dinner, and directed him to the Wood of the Wild Bulls, to bring one home. "I'll do that," said the Boy.

Off he went and when he came within seven miles of the Wood of the Wild Bulls, a drove of mad bulls charged at him, with the King Bull at

their head. But the Boy said to them, as they came near, "What's your hurry, lads? You'll all be dead long enough."

The King Bull was the first to reach him. The Boy just took hold of him by the horns, swung him around his head, and with him beat the brains out of the nineteen other bulls that made up the drove. He caught hold of the twenty dead bulls by the tails and throwing them over his shoulder, started home, and laid them down at the King's hall-door, saying, "What's the good of going all that journey for the sake of one bit of a bull? There are as many as will feed you for a fortnight. Now is there any other little job you need done?"

The King, who was in a fearful fright, said, "No, no, thank you, that's enough for this day, and you have well earned your wages. In the morning I'll see what I have to do again."

The King and his counsellors did not sleep that night, discussing what they should do to get rid of this wild fellow, before he killed them. They agreed that as he had destroyed the barn, he should be sent to the Dragon's Mountain to bring home timber for a new barn. "The Dragon," they said, "will never let him escape alive."

Well and good. In the morning when the Boy



came wanting his work, the King said he had nothing for him to do to-day, only to cut and carry home from the Dragon's Mountain enough timber to build a new barn.

"I'll do that," said the Boy. And he went off, taking with him the two biggest carts and the four biggest horses in the stable. When he got on the Mountain he tied the two pairs of horses to two trees, and began pulling up oak-trees by the root. The Dragon, finding the hill shaking, came thundering along, with his mouth like a mountain-cave, to find what was doing. The first thing he met was the two pairs of horses, and their carts. He swallowed carts, horses, and harness, without putting tooth in them, and down his throat went the trees to which they were tied, also.

The Boy, turning round, could see the tails of the horses, and the roots of the trees disappearing down the Dragon's throat. And said he, "After that breakfast, my bucko, you're surely fit for a fine day's work."

The Dragon with his mouth wider still, was now coming for himself. The Boy just pulled up the biggest oak-tree at hand, and with one spring he landed straddle-legs on the Dragon's neck, and began whacking him with the tree, so that the brute reared and roared and went running mad

round the Mountain. The Boy laid on him with the oak-tree as hard as he could whack, and every clip he gave the Dragon, the Dragon put out of him a yell like the end of the world. And when soon he had the Dragon tamed, he ran a chain round a clump of a hundred oak-trees, and to it tied the animal's tail, and getting on his back, started him off. At the first clip he gave the brute, it gave a screech and a bound and tore up by the roots the whole clump of oak-trees. He headed the Dragon for the King's Castle, and never stopped till he pulled him up at the King's hall-door.

The King and all his counsellors had got under beds, and up the chimneys and down into deep cellars, when they found the awful Dragon coming to the door, with the Boy on his back urging him. But the Boy coaxed them to come out—which the King said he would do, if the Boy would only send the Dragon back to the Mountain again. "Not hard is that," said the Boy. And loosing the load from the Dragon, he turned its head, gave it a smack of the oak-tree—and the Dragon went back to the Mountain like a streak of lightning.

"Is there any other little job I could do for you?" asked the Boy. "Thank you," said the

King, "that's enough for the day. You may now go and enjoy yourself."

That night the King and his counsellors sat up discussing what they should do to get rid of the Boy. And they concluded that the surest way to have his life was to send him next day to the Giant of the Seven Heads and Seven Trunks, to demand from him seven horses, seven asses, seven cows, and seven mules, seven ducks, geese, turkey-cocks, and pigeons, as tribute to the King of Ulster. The Giant, they said, would never let the Boy return alive, anyhow.

So in the morning the King told him that all he asked from him this day was to go to the Castle of the Giant of the Seven Heads and the Seven Trunks, and get from him his tribute—seven horses, seven asses, seven cows, and seven mules, seven ducks, geese, turkey-cocks, and pigeons.

"Is that all?" said the Boy. And he set off.

And the King gave a feast to celebrate their getting rid of the Boy now for ever. And in the middle of the feast, a breathless messenger came running in to tell them to go quickly to the windows and see what they'd see coming.

With the bits in their mouths choking them, the King and all his counsellors flew to the win-

dows. And what did they see coming over the hill but the Boy, bent double under the Giant's five barns which he had chained on his back. And the barns filled with horses, asses, cows, and mules, having their heads thrust through the windows, neighing and braying, and routing and roaring. And ducks, and geese, turkey-cocks, and pigeons, were perched and ranged on the rigging, cackling and quacking, and cooing and crowing to deafen the dead. The Giant, himself, was strapped to the back of one of the barns, with his seven heads roaring all at the same time. And between himself, his fowls and his animals, the riot they made was ridiculous.

The King and his counsellors fought like soldiers for the best hiding-place beneath the beds, and up the chimneys, and down in the deep, deep cellars. And when the Boy let loose the menagerie right in front of the hall-door, the King couldn't be coaxed to come out from under the best bed till the Boy had to shoulder his load, and haul it away again, complaining sorely that he wouldn't be bothered with this sort of employment.

After a night's consultation between the King and his counsellors, the King next morning told the Boy, that his work that day was to go to Hell

and bring from it the King's grandfather, who was wanted as witness in a land dispute, between the Kings of Ulster and Leinster.

"And how am I to know your grandfather?" said the Boy.

"You'll know him," said the King, "by his wearing a red skull-cap, and drinking his soup with a noise."

"Very well," said the Boy. And he set off. "Now, thank Heaven," said the King, "we are at last rid of the vagabond." And all the King's counsellors thanked Heaven from their hearts, too. But behold you! two hours weren't gone, when breathless messengers called on the King and the court to run to the windows, and see what they'd see. With that they rushed to the windows, and the sight they saw was half of Hell in red skull-caps coming down the hill, and the Boy driving them before him with a fiery flail.

"What's this? What's this? What's this?" says the King.

Said the Boy, "I found half of Hell wearing red skull-caps and drinking soup with a noise, and I thought the handiest way was to fetch them all here, and let you choose your grandfather for yourself."

"Take them away," said the King; "if you only

take them away, I'll never forget it to you till the day I die."

Said the Boy, "I'm very nearly vexed with this sort of employment. You're the hardest master that I ever knew to please, and I'm afraid I'll be tired before I've put in one term with you."

He headed the regiment round, however, and with a crack of the flail he sent them hurrying home again. "Is there anything else," said he, "that you need done to-day?"

"Thank you," said the King, "that's enough for this day. Go and enjoy yourself now."

Finally that night, the King and his counsellors to their great delight hit upon a plan that would rid them of the Boy for good and all, and they wondered why they hadn't thought of it at first. Below the castle, a well was being dug, two hundred feet deep, and it was agreed in the morning to send the Boy down to continue the digging. Three great granite millstones with holes dug in the centre of them were to be trundled to the top of the well by a hundred men, and thrown on top of the Boy at the bottom. And then three hundred men were to fling in all the clay on top of the corpse.

Bright and early the next morning the Boy was with the King asking for his work. And the King

said that all he would need him to do to-day would be to go down to the new well without, and lower it another hundred feet or so. "I'll do that," said the Boy. And down the well he went. Immediately the three great granite millstones were trundled there by a hundred men and thrown down. And three hundred other men fell to shovel clay in tons on top. The King and his counsellors were watching the fun from the castle windows. And great was their glee that now the Boy was surely done for at last. But behold you! when the men had been half an hour shovelling and put down about a hundred tons of clay, up pops the Boy's head above the well, with one great granite millstone hanging on his head like the rim of a hat, and the two other great millstones on his wrists like bracelets!

Up jumped he on the ground, and shook himself like a dog after coming out of a river,—shaking ten tons of clay off him, and scattering it for ten miles on every side of him. And up to the Castle he marched with the one millstone still on his head, and the other two on his arms, and addressed at the window the King, who was too thunderstruck to run away, and said, "I want to tell you that I can't do any more work in that well, unless you keep stationed a young lad at

the mouth, who'll keep the crows from scraping the dirt down on top o' me.—Ugh! see my mouth and my eyes are full of it. Here's a hat that some good Christian, who knew what I needed, threw down to me, and two other new ones to keep for Sunday. Would you mind putting these two away carefully for me? The one that's on me head I'll keep, for I need it."

The King and his counsellors fainted, and nothing brought them to, till the Boy emptied a Loch of water over them. Then the King said, "As you are such a good boy, and have done more work in a week than I hired you to do in a year and a day, you have well earned your wages. Now I'll weigh them out to you and let you go."

"You're too kind," said the Boy.

"Don't mention it," said the King. "Take off your hat and get into the scales."

"Take off my hat!" said the Boy. "You might as well ask me to take off my shirt.—You didn't put that into the bargain when you hired me." And into the scales he stepped, with the millstone on his head. And little gold was left in the King's cellar, when they weighed the scales down against the Boy and his hat—especially his hat.

And when he got the gold on his back he started for home. He said, "Good-bye to you, King, and



since I find you such a prompt payer, I'll be back to hire with you as soon as I've left this money with my mother."

"No, no!" said the King. "With all that gold you are far too wealthy and respectable to be one's servant-boy. If you promise never to come back, I'll give my promise that neither myself nor any other man in Ulster will ever mistreat any man in future who comes from Connaught to hire with us."

Said the Boy, "Then it's a bargain."

And home to Connaught went the Boy, bent under his burden of gold. A castle he built there, with a window for every day in the year, and a door against every window. He gave his mother a throne of gold in the castle, and married the King's daughter of Connaught. The wedding lasted nine days and nine nights, and the last day and night were better than the first—and the Son of Strength, with his bride, and his mother and every man, woman and child in the country of Connaught lived happy and well ever after.

And may you and I do likewise!

## XVII

### THE RESURRECTION OF DINNY MULDOON

**I**N the parish of Pulbochog, where me father's people come from, there's many a man strugglin' for straws, because the rents are that big, and the farms that small; but there's one man, and only one, who is as independent as a prince, and as well-to-do after his own fashion; and that's Dinny Muldoon. And Dinny is as he is; because he holds his bit of land free of all rent while grass grows, water flows, and crows put out their tongues.

How Dinny comes to be this way is a great story, in troth, and a dhroll one.

Dinny's father, that is now, was Cormac, and his father again was Dinny Muldoon likewise, or Dinny the Ghost, as he was known till the day of his daith. And him it was that got for the wee farm the privilege of goin' rent free, for ever and a day after.

I dar'say it's a good four score of years ago now

since Dinny the Ghost (as he wasn't named just then), mainin' for to be both good to himself and good to his farm, marri'd one Molshie M'Connell from the next parish, in the hopes that she'd fetch him both favour and fortune. But, Lord help poor Dinny! the fortune she fetched him was the clothes on her back, and a bad temper; and Molshie wasn't the third night in the house till Dinny seen the coat-tails of paice pass out of his door.

Me brave Dinny struggled with Molshie and the worl' as best he could, for three years. But the rent was high, and hard to pay, and for farm produce there was next to no price at all; so that debts and difficulties begun to hail on the poor divil. And to make bad worse, there rose hot blood between him and the men marched him, the Managhans and M'Cues, about a right-o'-way—which got so bitter, that to save his skin he had to go afore the magistrates and swear his life again' Big Dinis M'Cue, who threatened to murder him afore breakfast some mornin'. But instead of mendin' matters, this only made things worse. The Managhans and M'Cues now swore be all the saints in the almanac that they'd never get a peaceful night's sleep till they'd know the colour of Dinny Muldoon's blood.

“By this and by that,” says Dinny to himself

at last, "this must end. This climate isn't 'hol'-some for me, so I'll try a change." Without lettin' soul or sinner know, he made up he'd slip off unknownst and away till America. "Me wife and me neighbours 'ill maybe both be better of their tempers be the time I come back, and I'll 'arn as much money as 'ill lift me out o' me difficulties."

No sooner did night fall that selfsame day, than he went out to fother the cows (be pre-tence); but me brave Dinny took the road in rale earnest, to push for a sayport, and sail for the Lan' of Liberty. And he wasn't three fields from the house, when he met a beggarman that he gave a shillin' to, to swap clothes with him—so it would be the harder to trace him when the wife would rise the hewin'-cry afther him. That done, then wanst away and aye away, me brave Dinny wasn't seen or heard tell of more!

But, for the misfortunate poor beggarman 'twas the black hour that he took Dinny's shillin' and swapped clothes with him! For where did the Divil temp' his steps only across M'Cue's lan', over the very right-o'-way that rose all the bad blood! And who (as the Divil would still have it) should be convainient but Big Dinis M'Cue himself, with a terrific bludgeon of a stick in his han'. And: "Well, bad luck to you, Muldoon!"

says he, knowin' Dinny in the dark (as he thought), be the hat and sleeved waistcoat, and whole rig-out. "Bad luck seize you, Muldoon," says he, "for a provokin' ruffian! Take that!" and he tumbled the beggar with one blow of his bludgeon. And he never spoke more, for he was as dead as a stone dog.

Big Dinis, he went lookin' for help, and himself and his brother between them hoisted the corp on their shoulders, and marched with it across hedge and hill till they come to Mondarrig, where they tied stones to it, and sunk it in the deepest boghole they could find. Then says they: "The Lord be thankit! Dinny Muldoon's over and done with; and we'll have peace and a right-o'-way all to ourselves for the time to come."

Next mornin' the *gar* went roun' that Dinny Muldoon was a-missin'; went out to fother the cows and didn't come home las' night, and Molshie was distracted. And some sayed this, and some more sayed that; but it wasn't long till most of them agreed that Dinny had bid good-bye to hardships and hard livin', and gone to the river and drowneded himself; and the M'Cues sayed they had seen a man of his height and appearance goin' in the direction of the river las' night. But when the river was dragged and the country

screenged and sarched from end to wynd, thrace or thrack wasn't got of him. And poor Molshie was left to mourn and to manage as best she might.

And poorly enough she did manage for one year, and for longer. As Big Dinis M'Cue's land lay into her own, and as she was sorely in need of a man to care her farm, and Big Dinis just as sorely in need of a woman to care his house, people thought it 'ud be a *go* atween them. Dinis, in troth, begun to show Molshie attention enough, but she, of course, hadn't sartin' enough proof that Dinny was dead. When, as luck would have it, just near on the score of the second twelvemonth after Dinny's departure, doesn't a man who was barrowin' turf in the bog discover a corp floatin' in one of the holes.

The word was passed, and when the people crowded to see it, though the features was gone, all his neighbours at once recognised Dinny Muldoon be the oul' grey hat and the sleeved waistcoat with brassy buttons, and every article of apparel. Even Lanty Meehan, the shoemaker, could swear to the high-lows and the patches he put on the uppers. Poor Molshie come, wailin', and recognised him too, and cried over him her hearty

fill, as if there had never afore been a wife so grieved after a man.

Well, a hasty wake and a hurried funeral it got, and they hid it away as fast as they could.

Poor Dinny, poor man, he had reached America all safe and in good time, and went to work in the lead works, where he wrought hard and very hard for twelve months, and then lost his health complete be lead poisonin', and had to take to his bed, where he lay atween life and death for near twelve months more. And as soon as he found fit to put a foot inunder him he got up, and as his only hope of life was to get to Irelan' again, a few of his friends put as much together as bought him a ticket, and sent him off.

When Dinny landed he was noways unlike a very far-gone ghost—as white as bleached lint, only the eyes of him was sunk in his head and black round about, and the skin just hangin' from his bones. "But what I feel worst," says he to himself, lookin' down at his rags, "is the undaicent clothes I have—they'd disgrace a scarecrow." Hot-foot, then, he started for home, and when he come near where he'd be known, he waited till night fell on him, sooner nor be seen comin' back from America in such duds.

And when night did fall, on he went, an' for

his own house as smooth as he could, takin' the fields for it instead of the roads, so no wan would see him. And behold ye, when he climbed in of his own garden, what does he find, where Molshie had put them to get the air, only his own daicent oul' rig that he'd swapped with the beggar two years ago. "Thank God!" says Dinny, "for it's Him put them my way."

And without any more ado, off him he peels his own string o' rags, and gets into the sleeved waistcoat with the brassy buttons, and slaps his own brave oul' grey hat on his head. "Molshie, the knave, must a' made the poor beggarman give them up," says he; "but it stands me good service she did."

Now, as fortune would have it, this was only the third night after the berral, and Big Dinis M'Cue had strolled into Molshie's to comfort her, and settle up wee matters about the weddin'—which was now fixed upon for sartin', and to take place as soon as they daicently could think of holdin' it. And the both of them were sittin' purty close together, lovemakin', when me brave Dinny advanced and looked in of the winda! The first thing upset them then was an oneearthly yell without; and the next thing the door burstin' in, and Dinny Muldoon that they had turned the sods



upon three days afore—Dinny, in his oul' sleeved waistcoat, and lookin' more daithly than any dead man, jumped into the middle of the floor!

Molshie, she gave a scraim out of her, and fainted dead away. Big Dinis M'Cue, with his mouth open, lost the power to either move or speak, till Dinny, shakin' a bony fist under his nose, says: "Ye murderin' villian!"—which was a common word of abuse of his—"Ye murderin' villian, M'Cue! I'll never rest till I see ye in the hangman's hands!" Big Dinis with that got the power of his lungs and his legs all of a suddent, and lettin' a bawl out of him like a bull a-stickin', he dived atween Dinny's legs, and shot like a weaver's shuttle through the door.

Poor Molshie was in a rale bad way, and every time she opened her eyes and saw Dinny's white face and the sleeved waistcoat with the brassy buttons bendin' over her, she went off in another faint again. Says Dinny: "The woman 'ill die dead of the fear o' me onless I send in some of the neighbours to bring her to." So, out he went and down the road to Neilis Lainaghans, and he heerd big noise and fiddlin' as he come near it, for there was a dance in Neilis's, and all the countryside was gathered. Dinny lifted the latch and walked into the middle of them, and that ins'ant there was

a scraim in this corner of the house and a yell in that, and a groan in the other, and a racket and a rush all over, and a crush and a dive for the door; and in less time than I say it Dinny was standin' alone by himself, barrin' for half-a-dozen fainted women and girls that was lyin' among broken chairs; and every minute there was wan of these women comin' to, and, seein' Dinny, givin' another scraim and goin' off again.

"Well, bad cess to yous, one and all!" says Dinny, afther he'd stood in speechless wonderment for five minutes; "the worst of bad snuff to yous, one and all! Is the worl' gone mad, or what's come over Pulbochog, anyhow, that the sight of a man come back afther two years sends every wan helther-skelther like frightened hares in a harvest fiel'?"

But it was goin' from bad to worse with the faintin' women, so off he had to take himself and fare further. But behold ye, there wasn't a hut or house he come till that wasn't as emp'y as if the plague had cleaned them out; and he could only hear the shouts of the people as they were hurryin' and scurryin' far over the face of the earth. "Musha, and may the divil drive yous to the factory where they brew bad luck!" says he, turnin' and makin' for home again.

Intil his own byre he went—for he'd got enough of Molshie for one evenin'—and threw himself down to sleep under the cow's head, and slep' purty hearty.

Now, when Dinny left home first, the lan' had been in arrears of rent, and it had been gettin' deeper intil it since he left; and the landlord had at last just got a decree again' Molshie, and had ordered the bailiff to go to Molshie's, and seize something on the decree. So, it was on this very mornin' I'm talkin' of that the bailiff had made up to come on his decree. "I'll be there," says he, "afore Molshie is out and about, and I'll have me seizure lifted and carried off with small trouble."

So, close around the screek of day, he come, and walked intil the byre. "Here's a cow," says he, "'ill be good for ten poun' off the decree," and walked forrid to the baste's head to liberate her. And that minute up jumped Dinny, and naturally flew for the fellow's throat. But, my sorra! the bailiff, when he got the first gleek of him and seen who it was, didn't wait, but let out of him a yell and a howl, and sprung for the door and away, and never waited or stopped till he had put hills behind him.

Dinny prayed bad prayers on the bailiff that

had come to seize his only cow, and on the lan'lord that sent him. And then he started out hot-foot, and never stopped or stayed till he was at the lan'lord's house. The bailiff had reached there long ahead of him, and when he toul' the lan'lord that he didn't lift the decree because Dinny Muldoon's ghost had riz up at the cow's head, and spouted fire at him from both mouth and nostrils, the lan'lord give him no end of abuse for an *amadawn* and ediot, and swore he'd dismiss him and have a *man* in his place afore the sun set.

But, behold ye, the lan'lord was only warmin' up to it, and the poor bailiff, with his teeth still chatterin', takin' all insults as compliments, when the door opens and Dinny leaps in!

The tongue stood still in the lan'lord's mouth, and the hair rose on his head at the sight; and the poor bailiff give a howl and dived in under the lan'lord's chair.

"Small wonder yous is mortially ashamed of yourselves," Dinny thunders at them, "for to go for to take away a lone woman's cow!"

"It was—it was all a mistake," says the lan'lord, when he got his tongue. "It was all a great mistake, entirely," says he, "and I'm very, very sorry for it, and it'll never occur again, Mистер

Muldoon," says he, him tremblin' like a sally leaf, and the colour of the lime wall in the face.

"Ay, *Misther* Muldoon—no less," says Dinny till himself. "Troth, the lan'lords has been improvin' their manners since I left the country." And then says he, spaikin' out: "I'm glad to hear ye say it, for, in faith, I thought it was cold welcome to a man comin' back afther bein' two years gone from yous."

"Oh, then, *Misther* Muldoon, we're—we're—we're glad to see ye back. I suppose ye're goin' round to see all the neighbours afore ye go again; so I'll not be delayin' ye—good mornin'," says the lan'lord.

"Not so quick, be your laive, sir," says Dinny. "I seem about as welcome to the neighbours as to yourself and your bailiff; they all screech and show me their heels, whatever the divil's the matter with them."

The lan'lord was tryin' to be as plaisin' as possible. "Oh," says he, "*Misther* Muldoon, that's all only because we aren't *used* to you yet."

"Praise God, then, it'll not be my fault for the time to come," says Dinny, "or yous 'ill get used to me."

"Oh, *Misther* Muldoon, don't say that," says the lan'lord, beseechin' him.

“What the divil do *you* mane, now?” says Dinny.

“I mane,” says the other, “I mane that—that—oh, ye know what I mane! I mane that, of course, we’re very, very glad entirely to see ye; but—but we think ye’d maybe be better and happier *where ye were*,” says he.

“Happier!” says Dinny. “Look at me! Look at me! Ye’re now lookin’ at a man that suffered the tortures o’ Hell since he went away.”

The poor bailiff give a screech from inunder the chair, and the lan’lord give another screech.

“Plaise, Misther Muldoon, if ye go away from here, I’ll do anything at all to serve ye.”

“I only ax sparin’s and I’ll bring ye here inside one twelvemonth, and count ye down, every sovereign I owe ye, even if I have to rob the Divil to get it,” says Dinny.

“Oh, no, no, no! Plaise, no! Don’t bring me any money. I forgive ye every penny ye owe me, and I’ll make ye out a clear resait up till this day, if ye promise to put it in your pocket, and depart in peace.”

“Oh, ye ginerous man!” said Dinny, overcome with such unexpected goodness. “I’ll niver forget that act to ye. And for the time to come, as sure

as ever gale-day \* comes round ye'll find me the first man here in the mornin' with me rent to ye."

"Oh, no! Oh, no, *plaise!*" says the lan'lord. "Don't come with any rent to me ever. I'll here and now fill ye out a resait up till the year of ten thousand and nothin'—just to save ye the trouble and worry of comin' back."

And there and then, without more ado, he fills out a resait to say that "the undersigned, Dinis Muldoon, has paid me every penny of rent ever due again' his farm in Pulbochog, or that ever will be due again' it, up till and includin' the year ten thousand and nothin'."

And the dumbfoundhered Dinny takes this from the lan'lord's thrimblin' hand, and pockets it, and walks off.

But he didn't see man or mortal, soul or sinner, nor couldn't know what happened to them till he come as far as the chapel, and this he found panged with people to the door. For, the way of it was, Molshie, by the advice of the neighbours, had asked for the parish to pray that Dinny's soul might get rest, and all the parish had gathered to join their prayers.

Into the chapel poor Dinny walks, and the minute they saw him the congregation let a howl

\* Rent Day.

out o' them that near carried the roof off the buildin', and made such a rush for the three doors that it was marcy they didn't take the side-walls with them. And Dinny found himself alone in the chapel with Father Mat.

The same priest was a purty courageous man, and he actually walked forrid to Dinny and addressed him, commandin' him in the Name to say what was a-trouble to him to fetch him back here.

"A-trouble to me!" says Dinny. "I knew nothin' but trouble and Hell's torments since I left here."

"To your shame, be it sayed, Dinny Muldoon," says Father Mat. "It wasn't for want of warnin's enough from me ye went astray."

"True for ye—true for ye, father," says Dinny. "And it's often since, when I was sufferin' the torments that I sayed the same to meself."

"Well, well, it's me is the sorry man for ye, Dinny Muldoon; but it's too late to lament now. Is there anything I can do for ye?" says the priest.

"Yes, your reverence; can ye tell me why these people loses their wits, and runs like the Roe water when they see me?" says Dinny.

"Oh, that's only natural," says Father Mat. "They'll not be content till ye're gone again. So hurry yourself."



"Till I'm gone! But I'm come to remain," says Dinny.

"Come, come!" says the other; "ye can't do that, ye know."

"And why not, may I ask?" says Dinny.

"There's no whys in it," says Father Mat. "If ye have anything on your mind, or any request to ask, ask it, and go."

"Well, upon my veracity, that is a cool way to trait one who expected a wee bit of welcome and pleasure after two years of tortures," says Dinny.

"Ye're after confessin' ye earned your tortures," says Father Mat.

"But I've made up me mind to turn a new laif," Dinny said.

"It's too late now, if ye had made up your mind to turn a whole grove," says the priest. "There's no second chances in your worl'," says he. "So, right about face, now," says he, "and march; or, if ye don't do it of your own free will, I'll soon find a means of makin' ye."

Poor Dinny, poor man, was sore put about at this traitment. "But," says he, "it 'ud puzzle ye to take stockin's off a barefooted man. How am I to go without either money or mains?"

"Come, none of your *nadiums*," says Father Mat; "go the way ye come."

"I come in the *Elizabeth Jane*," says he, "to Darry, and had to pay smartly for it."

"What do ye mean?" says the priest, says he; and he puts his hand on Dinny and feels him.

"Aren't ye a dead man, sir?" says he.

But, faix, the grip of Dinny didn't at all feel like what a ghost should, to Father Mat's mighty wonderment; and he never let go of him till he marched him out of the chapel and along the road, hearin' Dinny's story as they went. The people they were crouchin' on the hills watchin' them both, and waitin' to see Dinny go off like a puff o' smoke. But that they didn't see.

Father Mat marched Dinny straight home to Molshie, and toul' her it wasn't Dinny's ghost at all, at all, but Dinny himself; but Molshie took her heels with her from the house, and wild horses wouldn't drag her back again. She'd never come, she said, to live with a ghost.

An' she was as good as her word; and, in troth, Dinny didn't br'ak his heart with the grief, either.

Big Dinis M'Cue, when he got the fright, had never stopped runnin' till he'd reached the polis barracks, and given himself up for murder.

Dinny Muldoon himself took a holiday to attend the hangin'. And happy as he was that day, he was never a day less so, till the day he died,

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and left his freehold to his son Cormac, a child Molshie left with him; and Cormac left it to his son again' Dinny, and as I sayed, Dinny and his freehold are flourishin' in Pulbochog at this day. And long may they continue so.

    Yourself and meself, likewise.

